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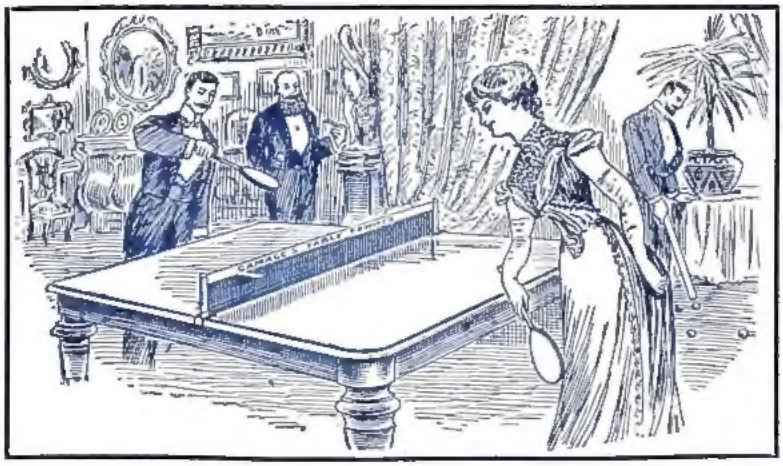

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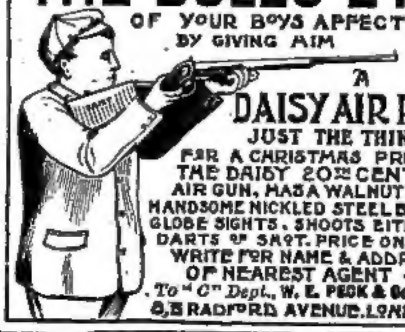

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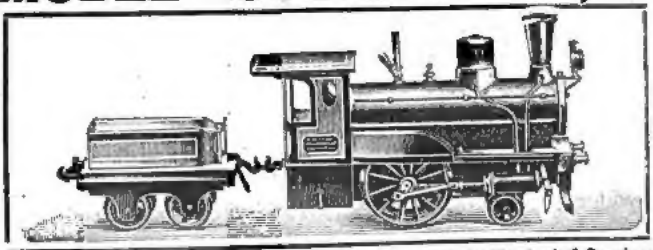

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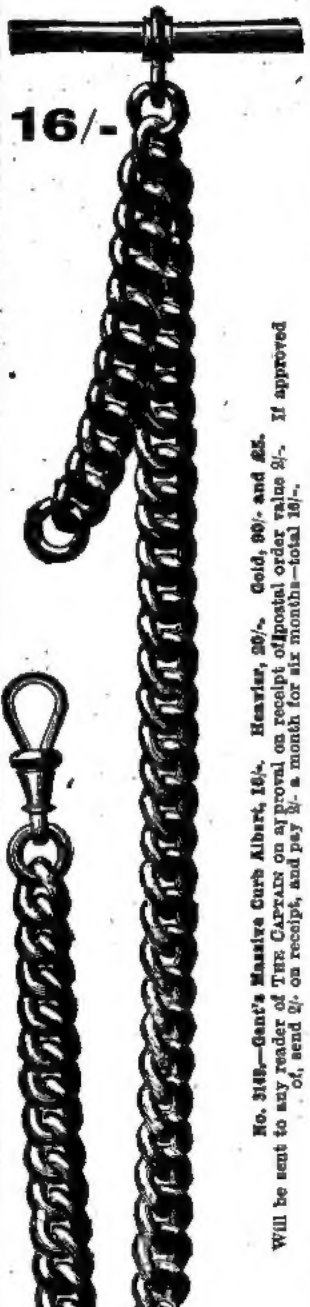

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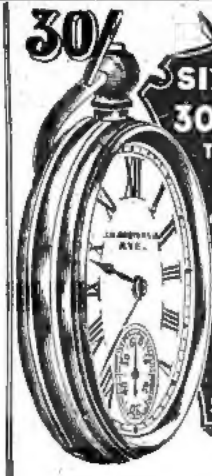

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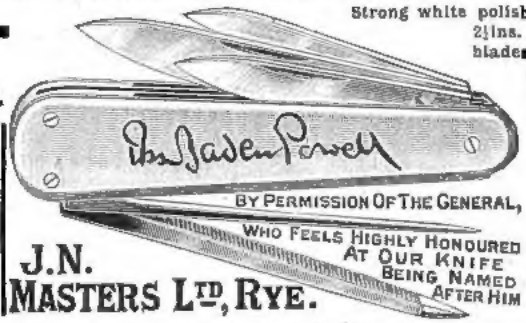

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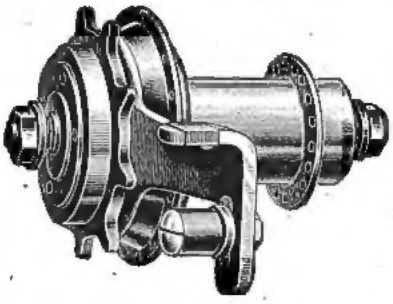

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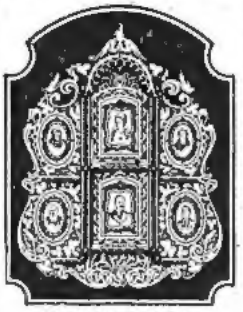

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THE CAPTAIN.

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THE EDITOR.]

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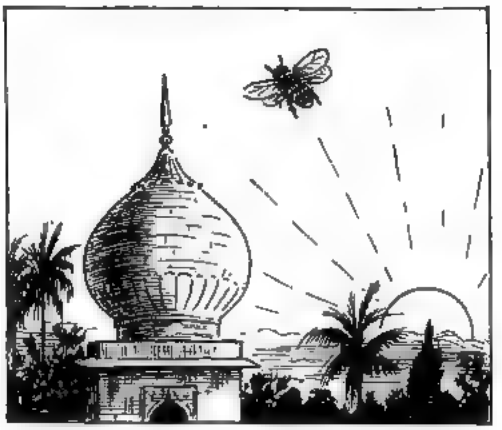
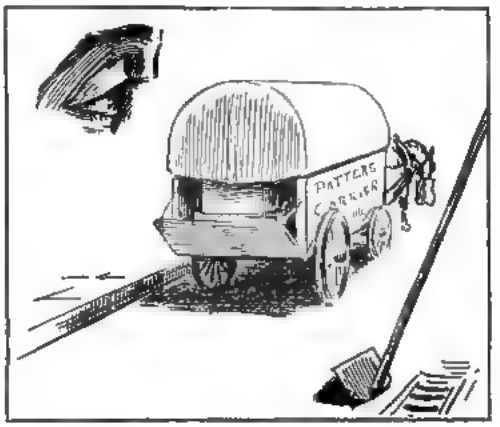




The above sketches indicate the names of two well-known books.
See Comp. I., "Hidden Books" (page 447).

There are twenty-three prizes—£1, 10s., 5s., and twenty books. No age limit.

SULLIVAN BEGAN TO CLIMB.

WHY THE HOT SULPHUR MAIL WAS LATE.

By Chauncey Thomas. Illustrated by Charles S. Chapman.

"One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin."

BERTHOUD Pass is a mighty pass. It is the crest of a solid wave of granite two miles high, just at timber-line. Berthoud is a vertebra in the backbone of the continent. It is the gigantic aërial gateway to Middle Park, Colorado—a park one-fifth as large as all England. The mail for this empire is carried by one man, my friend Sullivan.

On Berthoud is a pebble. One summer a raindrop fell upon that pebble, splashed in two, and each half rolled away; one down the Platte-Missouri-Mississippi, the longest river on the globe, to the Atlantic; the other down the Fraser, along the Grand, through the greatest of gorges, the Grand Cañon of the Colorado, where the stars shine by day, into the Pacific. Then from the two oceans the nebulised half-drops arose, sun-drawn, miles into the zenith, and rode the winds straight back to Berthoud Pass. There they united and crystallised into a snowflake. And then came the cold. Far above the pass, the frosted spirit hung in Damoclean deadliness over a creeping speck below—Sullivan the mail carrier. The rising sun glorified the snowflake; but away down in Clear Creek Cañon, where other waters gurgled and strangled under the ice, it was still a blue dark. Sullivan and the sun began to climb. The morning light started down Berthoud just as Sullivan started up. The snowflake watched the crawling atom, then blew across the pass, and from all along the range gathered unto itself the storm. On Berthoud was all the power of the Arctic. But the intelligent dot climbed on.

Eleven months of every year there is snow on Berthoud; only in July are the flowers safe. Even then, in shades that the sun cannot search—packed by the centuries—is snow that fell on the rocks before they were cold. How black, how sharp the shadows are on the heights—and how cold! In them for ages has lurked ice from the glaciers of the north. Silent Christmas finds Berthoud hung with avalanches. At Easter they come to life, and, leaning over the valleys, are so exquisitely held that they are launched even by an echo touch. About them, in long, wavering lines and tiny whirls, the gritty snow blows like sugar. Shrub-like, the tops of pines bend under beards of alabaster moss, their trunks buried for 70ft. Airy crystals float as on Polar fairies' breath; the sunlight is alive with blue sparkles; the twig splitting in the cold sends a puff of frosty feathers; in the gale white shot sings in level volleys. Nature on Berthoud in winter is not dead, but alive. She is congealed into a new life. The very air seems to snap. A mist, frozen to a transparent blue, quivers with its own chill. Water is not ice, but glass. When the black, solid lakes burst and shatter in the awful cold, ice splinters fly like slivers of white-hot iron. Ice powder, hard, dry, and sharp, grinds the web snow-shoes like steel filings. On Berthoud at night the stars are near; they silently crackle and spit colours like electric sparks.

In the valley the morning star paled as if frozen, and with a spiteful snap winked out. The line of sunlight, half-way down the Pass, met Sullivan, half-way up. The blue-grey cold melted to a flood of Heaven's own warmth. It would be warmer soon, then hot, then blistering on the snow. Sullivan stopped to rest, panting steam; peeled off his coat, and put on his veil.

To climb Berthoud in winter is the work of a man. It is too much for an engine. The man was at his work. Slowly up the east side, around the Big Bend, up to the now deserted mail barn, laboured the mail carrier. The summit was a mile farther on, and a quarter of a mile farther up. No arranged postal car, warm, light, and convenient, was the lot of Sullivan. The car was on his back, a bag of mail. Contrary to regulations, devised by easy-chair postal officials in far-off Washington, the papers and packages had been held at Empire. Only the letters went over.

"They'll keep," said the Empire postmaster, a man of vast common sense, as he tore a chew off Sullivan's plug. Then he and Sullivan hid the bag of "second-class" under the hay in the manger of the mail team until the thaw was over. So Sullivan travelled light—only 64lbs. on his back and 20lbs. of wet snow on each web snow-shoe a foot beneath the surface.

By the bleak station laboured Sullivan.

"Only zero! Hot. Whe-ew-w!" gasped the carrier as he wiped the sweat from his eyes with the sleeve of his shirt. Sullivan meant it. Twelve feet of frigid white was between him and the earth; in the shadows the mercury was solid in the split tubes, yet in the sunlight the surface was slush. Sullivan was in his shirt sleeves, with fur mittens on his hands. Icicles hung from his eyelashes, yet his cheeks were burning. His nose was a blister, though his face was veiled as heavily as milady's on an escapade. In the sun the snow was mush: in the shadow it was marble. Such is sunlight and shade on the south-eastern snowbanks at timber-line. No wind. And the air was thin. Silence. The only sound was the carrier's laboured breath and the sock-rasp-splosh of the shoes; and Sullivan came to the summit—and the shadow. There the mercury falls a degree a minute when the sun goes down; 104 at noon, an inch of ice at dawn. The ground is frozen for 540ft. Such is the summer summit.

But this was winter. Up the south gorge, like the burst of a volcano, so cold that the smoke was snow-dust, roared the storm. Sullivan saw it, looked with the indifferent interest of long experience, and put on his short fur coat. As he retied his snow-shoes he looked back—and down. Below him lay the west fork of Clear Creek, green in the coming spring. He stood on the rampart of winter. On either side towered pinnacles of storm-eaten rock, bleak as the Poles themselves. From their tops white powder streamed in the wind like crests, and floured down on the pigmy at their feet. The carrier was taking a swift, silent good-bye of the infant summer. Straight to the south flamed the sun, so low in the clear sky that Sullivan, standing on Berthoud, felt that it was below him—that he stood alone on the tip of the universe. Behind him the swirling heavens were murky; the world was black, white, and thin blue—silent, motionless, and cold.

But the cold was creeping for Sullivan's heart, and he swung his arms.

"Good for the legs," he remarked to a stump that in summer was a dead pine tree. "Track looks like a hobbled elephant. Well, here goes." And down into the gorge went Sullivan.

The gale had started in Alaska, and swept two-thirds of a continent to the south east. In Montana it had torn the anemometer, the official whirligig, from the signal station, but had left the register, and the needle pointed to eighty-five miles an hour. It was stronger now. Caught by the wide mouth of the south fork of the Fraser and jammed into the rocky defile, the white fiend roared straight into the air and doubled back on its track. Into this walked Sullivan. A single snowflake, sharp as a bunch of needle-points, struck his forehead, but glanced away into the white tempest. Snow-sand cut his veil. Instantly his breath was sucked from his lungs and sent 20,000ft.—four miles above the sea. Sullivan whirled, his back to the flinty sleet, and the storm fell upon his sack. But no snowstorm can stop the United States mail. With a jerk Sullivan wrenched a breath from the torrent.

"Quite a Colorado zephyr," he yelled, but could not hear himself.

There was almost perfect silence around him, because he could hear nothing—only a leaden roar. No slush there; the surface was sandpaper. Zip-zip-zip, with his head low, Sullivan butted down the gulch. Then it eased up. The wind dropped to a mile a minute, and it cleared greatly. Sullivan could see ten feet ahead. Easier now, he loped over the crust, down, down, down, leaving no track; not even a whiff of snow was blown from the trail. The snow was hard, sharp, and glittered in the white night as the surface of broken steel. A blast of snow-sand caught the flying carrier full in the face. The ground ice cut like powdered glass shot from a battery. Sullivan, his arms before his head, ran into and leaned against a cracking pine like a guilty child. The pine straightened with a snap, quivering as if tired. Sullivan lowered his arms; all was still, quiet, pleasant. The snow was smiling; the sun was shining; there was no wind.

"Lovely, ain't it? Snowslide gone off wrong end up," said a voice.

Sullivan jumped. A quick sweep of the near distance showed nothing human but himself.

"Did I say that?" he muttered. "This bucking snow is about as good on a man's savey as herding sheep. I'll be as locoed as a swelled-necked buck if I keep this up. Hello!"

"Howd'y?" answered the voice, while from under a sheltering ledge, crusted over but filled soft and dry with icy down as if banked from a feather-bed, a sheeted figure appeared and shook itself. It fairly rattled.

"Nice little blow, wasn't it? I had an idea I was the only pack animal of the long-eared breed on the range; but I see I have company, baggage and all. Glad to see you, though. By the way, sorry to trouble you, but I'll have to ask you for those shoes and that coat; also any spare change you've got, your ticker, and that mail-bag. Now don't go off half-cocked and empty, or we'll have trouble."

He of the voice had levelled a long six-shooter, white with frost and snow, at the mail-carrier. Sullivan was not startled—what was the use?

But he was annoyed — this lacked mountain courtesy. Then he grinned.

"Not this trip, pardner. Your artillery's as full of snow as the Arctic Circle, while this instrument I have——"

Flame, smoke, and steam exploded between the two men. As it floated upward, he of the voice was bent double, squeezing his right hand between his knees. Blood was dripping over his felt boots and over-shoes. An exploded six-shooter rang on the ice twenty feet away.

"I told you you'd have fireworks if you turned that ice-jam loose. No wonder she bu'sted. What'd you expect? You're too experienced a man by the looks of you to throw such a kid trick as that. Thought I wasn't heeled, hey, and you'd work a bluff on me, did you? Goin' to spear me on an icicle! Now, you fool"—Sullivan's tone became a dry metallic—"you wriggle a hair and I'll kill you. My gun has not been out all winter. It's ready for business. Just off the hip; hot as buckwheat. Now don't do the stage-eye

HE STOOD ON THE RAMPART OF WINTER.

HE LEVELLED A LONG SIX-SHOOTER, WHITE WITH FROST AND SNOW, AT THE MAIL CARRIER.

act on me, nor try any football dives—and leave that sticker of yours alone. You might cut somebody with it. No, thank you, I'll help myself. Straighten up now, and turn your back. See here! Are you going to do as I tell you, or shall I fix your hide so that they'll tan it for chair bottoms? Jump lively now, or I'll fill you so full of lead that you'll assay for Leadville ore, and it'll take the coroner's jury twenty-four hours to count the holes. Still, I don't want to kill you; it's a dirt job, and I would rather walk you into town than haul you there on your back. Oh, don't go frothing now and sass me back like that. Of course I'm festive. Who wouldn't be, with a five-thousand-dollar winner—*hold on there!*—five thousand-dollar gold mine, as I was a-sayin', in your own self as a standing reward for Black Jack. *N-no*, my dear sir! A single jump into my latitude and I'll plug you. Post office robber, hugh! And gathered in by Uncle Samuel himself in the person of your humble striker! Lor'! I ain't talked so much since speech-makin' over good luck come into fashion. Oh, yes, I know you. No; it ain't no lie either. I have your circular description here in my pocket, right next my heart, to tack up in ev'ry mail window between Empire and Hot Sulphur. You're wanted, wanted bad; five thousand dollars' worth of bad, too; and I've got you—and incidentally I intend to keep you. Now drop that cleaver of your'n and shinny on down the trail there, or you'll have troub——"

A mile above a concussion jolted the cliff; a terrific echo to the pistol-shot. Down came the slide—gently at first—so far away it seemed only as wide as one's hand. In an instant the snow shot from under the two men. The enemies fell flat. A mile of snow, bristling hair-like with root-torn pines, thundered down the slope. Sullivan and "Black Jack," forgetful of each other, were tossed whirling in the air, and fell back into the grinding chaos. Yet the piece of ice on which they lay was thick and solid, laced and interlaced with tough brushwood, frozen in. This woven acre rode the avalanche like a sled.

An hour later a mountain lion sneaked over the wreck. A hill of snow, ice, broken stone, and splintered logs damned the gulch. Away to the top of the range the track of the slide lay like a scald. Miles away, high in the air, a cloud of white dust was floating. All nature was hushed, as if frightened. A screeching eagle went flapping far away. From under the ruin a wolf howled dismally; then weaker and weaker—a piteous whine—silence. Berthoud had struck a terrible blow; and humanity—where were the men? The panther was hunting; his nose had found them, but not his jaws. Settling himself, he dug. As the famished brute raked a log to one side with his gaunt paw he heard a groan within an inch of his ear. Whirling, he flashed up the mountain side—a streak of yellow; but his work was done. From the shallow hole Sullivan appeared—chalk white, his face a ghastly blue. He struggled carefully, then desperately, to free himself; but when he stopped, exhausted, only his head and shoulders showed above the snow.

"Pinned down—dead—my last trip—and yet not hurt. Freeze like a cockroach in the ice-house. Cool, my boy, cool—keep cool. Don't lose your head—don't get rattled, or you're a dead man. Now's when you need all your brain. Keep cool—though you'll be cool enough all too soon."

Sullivan's head disappeared in the panther-dug hole. Slowly the end of a small log 10ft. away rose into the air and fell aside. Up straightened the grizzly head of Black Jack, one side daubed with a red slush.

"Well—I—be—hanged! This don't look much like joy," growled the desperado as he gazed around on the confusion. He noticed the straining mail-sack. Black Jack waited silently until the carrier's haggard face again came above the rim. The two men looked into each other's eyes.

"Hurt?" asked Sullivan.

"Don't think so. Both feet fast. How's yourself?"

"One leg in a vice—can't move it. What d'you think?"

"We're done for."

"Guess you're right. How's the snow round you?"

"None 't all—all ice. Solid."

"Hold still. I've got one foot a little loose," exclaimed Sullivan as he stamped on a log far below.

"Same log," said the thief, "got us both."

Nothing more was said. They went to work. The carrier unslung the mail-sack and laid it carefully aside. For an hour both men strained, pulled, twisted, and dug with bare fingers until the purple ends were raw. Human fingers are not panther claws. Both men were packed tight up to their armpits in solid snow. Four feet below the surface of the ruin their legs were fast between two parallel logs as in a steel trap. An inch closer and their ankles would have cracked like pipe-stems; an inch wider and the men would have been free. They were not hurt; merely held. Berthoud had been kind only to be cruel.

"No use," panted Sullivan; "my trail ends here."

"Mine don't. I wish it did," answered Black Jack. The hard tone was gone, the voice was almost gentle. "Sing-Sing's ahead of me. You're a honest man, my friend, and have nothin' to

fear from death; while I——" and there was silence for many minutes. "Many's the time I've faced it, but not when I had to think it over—like this," he continued as if to himself.

Then they waited. A camp robber came like the blue angel of death, and scolded within a yard, mocking them.

"Lucky jay, you've got what I would give the world for," mused Black Jack.

Sullivan said nothing. He was thinking of a little log-cabin at Hot Sulphur; of an old, white-haired lady who at that moment he knew was rocking contentedly before the open fire in the hot stone fireplace. The carrier was brave; he did not want to die. Life held so much for which to live and to work; yet he waited calmly, his brain as cold as his freezing foot.

At intervals the men struggled, wrenched their muscles, with no hope of getting out, but to keep warm. The thirst-fever that comes from pain dried the carrier's tongue. He longed for water. A mouthful of snow burned like hot cinders. He spat it out and pressed the rigid jaw with stiff, bare hands to warm the aching teeth. He looked about for water. Fifty feet up the mountain, in the lee of a boulder, was a spring; but it was

"WE'RE DONE FOR."

frozen solid and banked with snow. The breeze was gently keen. Sullivan's clothes grew cold; he felt nude, and shrank from them; his skin became small and tight, smarting as if blistered. A chill shook him. Blunt pains worked along the bones and met in the joints. Each particular finger and toe seemed about to burst; his scalp stiffened; his chin was numb. The cold was gnawing between his shoulders, was biting for his heart. Only the wedged foot was warm, strangely warm. Webs of spidery ice floated in the cheerful sunlight and vanished. Flashing wrigglers swarmed before the man's eyes and disappeared—only to come again. Sullivan was freezing. Away into the sky loomed Berthoud, hoary with icy ermine and wrapped in fleecy clouds. To Sullivan's hopeless eyes the wreathing veil seemed smoke and steam, curiously warm. He shuddered, locked his rattling jaws, and grimly faced the end.

Up on the summit the clouds were of gold; the very top was red. In oblivious majesty rose the pass; but over and about the two heads sticking from the snow a single snowflake, flashing, dazzling, glittering, was wafted like a dancing diamond. It tickled Sullivan's face, then tumbled into the air in a very ecstasy of whirls. The man's head drooped, drooped, dipped, jerked back, drooped again, and hung pendulously. Sullivan was asleep, warm and comfortable. With a dull yell of pain he awoke. Black Jack had hit him in the ear with a snowball.

"Hang on, friend! Keep a-scrapin'! Don't give up!" were the rough words of cheer.

The carrier knotted his muscles, shook off the torpor as if it were the tightening coils of a cold snake, and rubbed his burning ear.

"What's the use? We'll both be stiff in three hours. Might as well have it over with," replied Sullivan as if speaking of a card game.

Aroused, he freed his feet of the webs, and forced some feeling into the prisoned one. From his pocket he took his lunch, until now forgotten, and silently tossed half to his fellow-prisoner. The camp-robber darted on to a piece of meat in the air, and flew squawking to a limb. Black Jack swore at the bird in profane amusement. Sullivan redivided his piece of pork and threw it over.

The robber protested, raked it in, and tossed it back. Sullivan ate his own share, but this piece of meat he put back into his pocket.

Black Jack looked at him.

"Say, pardner, you're a man."

The fires of life, rekindled, flamed up anew in the desperado.

"I *will* get loose," he snarled with set teeth as he tore frightfully at the snow packed around his waist.

"Try this; my hands are too stiff to use it," said Sullivan, as he threw his watch to Black Jack.

"Ah, a regular snow-plough," grunted the other, as he sprung open the lid with his teeth and began to scrape. "Sa-ay!"—the yell rang up the pass—"here's my knife."

Buried tight in the snow was the knife—life itself—within easy reach, yet frozen fast. Sullivan did not answer, but waited.

Just then Black Jack's hands dropped the watch. It vanished along his leg into the black hole that held him, and then faintly clinked on a stone under the log-jam. With a curse the lifelong criminal clawed viciously at the snow with scarlet fingers. Ten minutes' scratching cleared the handle and hilt of the heavy bowie; and Black Jack's head and shoulders arose triumphant, his gory right hand flourishing the priceless steel. The light from that blade flashed to the very top of Berthoud. Sullivan writhed to keep warm.

The shadows were growing longer now. Another two hours the sun would be down, and their lives would go out like candles. Black Jack ripped, jabbed, strained, and from his burrow hurled ice, snow, and splintered wood. Iron against water, with men for stakes. In thirty minutes he was free all but his feet. Both ankles were held between two logs; one thick as his waist, the other a mere pole. Hack, slice, split. In five minutes more Black Jack, sweating and breathless, crawled painfully from the hole. He tried to stand, but tottered and fell as if on stilts. He rubbed, he pounded, he rolled and twisted his numbed calves and feet; the thick, black blood turned bright and throbbed again. Black Jack stood erect, danced sorely, and, except for his skinless fingers and a scalp wound, now staunched with a frozen plaster of gory hair, he was as well as ever. The bruised shoulder was unheeded. A lustreless snowflake dropped weakly at the man's feet. He stepped on it as he picked up the knife and clambered over the snow and logs to the carrier.

Black Jack looked at Sullivan, and Sullivan looked at Black Jack. Sullivan's lips were without motion, but in his eyes was the look of a pawfast grizzly. The desperado seated himself on a broken spruce branch not six feet from Sullivan, rested his hands on his knees, and thought. He stared at the carrier. Here was a man whom two hours before he had tried to kill; who in turn stood ready to kill him; who had even started him at the muzzle of his six-shooter on that short, sure road to a living death—the penitentiary for life. Leave him there—why not? No crime; he had not put him there. What if

it were a crime? Who would know? And what if they did? In the spring—perhaps not for years—they would find the skeleton, and fleshless jaws say little. Dig him out—then what? Was it not to set free a messenger sure to start the machinery of the law to land the rescuer in a cage—a cage where nothing could come but insanity and death? Had he not escaped entirely by his own efforts? The watch! But the other's hands had been—still were—too cold to use it, so it could have done him no good. Black Jack thought these things, seated on the log-end in the snow-slide that frigid February day, facing his enemy—that enemy now harmless, but all-powerful if free. Why reverse their positions? Black Jack looked at the range ahead. It was good just to be alive—and free. Then he looked once more at Sullivan—silent, waiting Sullivan—then at the empty hole, splotched with his own blood.

Why not kill him quickly? One thrust, and the cold-tortured man would be out of his misery—surely an act of mercy. Was not this enough? The reckless, murderous robber, careless of life and death, hunted by seventy-two millions, a bounty on his head, thoroughly understood the situation. So did his victim. The camp robber flickered into the air and away homeward to a distant ranch. This winged freedom fascinated the criminal. He watched the bird float beyond the pine tops, looked again at the range, stiffened to his feet, picked up the bowie, glanced behind him, and gazed down at the helpless, freezing Sullivan.

"I would not trade places with you," came from the carrier's lips; but the murderer was looking at the pocketed piece of meat. Then Black Jack took the knife by the blade and handed it to Sullivan.

The carrier tried to speak. Black Jack smiled, and with wooden fingers fumbled for his pipe. Sullivan bent into the hole to hide his tears—and to work. A half hour and Black Jack pulled the carrier from the hole; a minute more and the two men—the morally white with black spots, the morally black with white spots—stood face to face. Sullivan put out his hand. Black Jack took it.

"Pardner, you're a square man! Thanks. Here"—Sullivan peeled off his fur jacket, his cap, and his overshoes—"take these, and this," added the carrier, as he handed the robber two bills and some silver.

Then he hesitated; but, with a jerk, unbuckled his cartridge belt and, with its dangling holster full of snow, gave it to Black Jack.

"You'll find the gun in the hole; I felt it with my foot. Don't use it unless you have to; she's sighted to a hair, and has a soft trigger. But *I* want this knife. Good-bye. Mexico is the place for you—less snow there."

Both men smiled grimly.

"Take straight down the gulch on the other side; it'll be frozen by the time you get there. A freight is due at Empire at two in the morning—usually late, though. You can make it if you hump yourself. The shoes are in the hole there; I kicked them off. Eat that bacon when you get on top; it'll help limber up your legs. Leave the trucks at the mouth of the cañon—she slows up there for the switch—for Golden is right ahead, and your picture is in the post office. Cut to your right across the saddleback, which you'll see about four miles to the south-east; then straight on south-east fifteen or twenty miles, and you'll hit the Santa Fé tracks going south. Jump 'em, and a week from now you'll cross the Rio Grande—*quien sabe?* Go to the Three Triangle outfit in Chihuahua; tell the foreman—Pete Miller he is known by down there—I sent you, and he'll give you a job punching. He'll do it 'cause I snaked him out of the Grand four years ago, with his chaps on, and she was a boomin'—runnin' ice. I'd help you fish out those webs, but I've got a case of cold feet, and guess I'll have to quits ya."

"Your foot's frozen, ain't it? And I reckon I'd better be goin' a piece back with you," said Black Jack.

"No; no need of that; only frosted—all right now. I can stump it in all right. These Dutch socks'll last me till I reach Chipmunk's. You've no time to lose, pardner, so *adios*. Good luck to you, and"—Sullivan stopped embarrassed—"and—if I were you I'd quit this business. Don't pay."

"You're right. I made up my mind to that in the hole there—just before I found the knife. If I hadn't—you——" Black Jack left the sentence as it was, but Sullivan knew. He gripped the desperado's hand again; but its five bleeding fingers made him think of five one-thousand-dollar bills.

"Well, be good to yourself. The mail must go through," the carrier replied as he swung the sack to his shoulders. Then with the knife held like a sword, Sullivan saluted the other and left him. Black Jack's face was working, but he said nothing. At the edge of the timber Sullivan turned and once more waved the bowie. Black Jack swung his cap. Then Sullivan passed beneath the pines.

Three hours late the carrier limped into Chipmunk's. Ten feet of snow on the level had buried the station in December; only the plumed chimney showed. During that tramp Sullivan had

LEAVE HIM THERE—WHY NOT!

been thinking; the inevitable reaction had set in and he staggered under his load, for it seemed to him as if that sack contained the mail of the whole nation; his brain was boiling with conflicting thoughts and warring emotions; and his conscience was divided against itself, for the carrier was an honest man. One word to those in the cabin and by midnight Black Jack, the most dangerous mail robber in the United States, would be behind the bars.

Sullivan shoved open the hinge-complaining door. Gansen was swearing—had been for two hours.

"What's the trouble?" he demanded. "Think I'm agoin' to hold that team here a week and drive it all night, with the spirit thermometer fifty-two below at the Springs this mornin'? If I miss the Colter connection Glenn won't do a thing but come up the line with a meat-axe for the whole outfit. The mails has got to go through. What's the trouble? You look as if you and a mowing-machine had been havin' an argument."

"Oh, nothin'," said Sullivan. "Bucked into a little slide just above High Bridge. We mixed and I lost most of my goods and chattels, but acquired a whole museum of bumps and such things, beside a choice set of refrigerated toes. But here's the mail. No. No second-class at Empire at all. Guess it's delayed in Denver; or else good people don't mail papers in the winter-time. See here, Chipmunk, you old gorilla! I want you to let up on trappin' along my trail. I don't like it. Found a marten in one of your confounded machines, and I turned him loose. Threw the Newhouse about forty miles somewheres off into the timber. I don't want any more of it. Savey?

"Well, *adios*, Jim. Give my apologies to the folks in Hot Sulphur 'cause their mail is late. It won't happen next time—perhaps not for a thousand years. Tell Mark I'll be down to the dance, sure. Ask the Colter schoolmarm to save me a waltz. Sure, now! Ta-ta.

"Say, Chip! Get a wiggle on ya. Got any coffee? I'm tired." And Sullivan lifted the pot off the stove. On the fire he put a bunch of circulars. He soon had the coffee boiling.

SECRET WRITING.

WRITING by means of a cypher used always to be practised by ambassadors and statesmen, especially in times of war. This art was at its height during the Civil War, in the reign of Charles I., and was also used a good deal at the time of the French Revolution. There are many different cyphers, but the simplest of them all is that in which letters are used that are one, two, or three, or any other number of places in advance of the right letter.

The following is an example in which one letter in advance is used: "Dpvme opu sfbdi zpv jo ujnf zftufsebz. Xjmm dpnf upnpsspx;" which, being interpreted, is: "Could not reach you in time yesterday. Will come to-morrow."

In some cyphers the right letters are used, but must be read upwards or downwards, or diagonally, to be understood.

Cypher writing can be made still more puzzling by joining all the words together, spelling the words backwards, or inserting "dummy" letters here and there.

Beggars have a sort of cypher which they use in country places, where the inhabitants are not so sharp as those in the larger towns. This they use to inform the succeeding tramps what sort of treatment to expect at the different houses. A clergyman, it is said, studied this cypher, and found out that ⌐¬ meant "Unfavourable; likely to have you taken up"; and also that ⊙ meant "Dangerous; sure to get a month in 'quod'" (prison). This caused him to inscribe these two signs or cyphers on his gate-post, and ever since he has enjoyed a peaceful security from all vagrants.

Business people often use a cypher to mark the price on goods. They choose a word of ten different letters, and assign a number to each letter. Thus, supposing the word chosen to be "Blackpines," B stands for 1, L for 2, A for 3, and so on, S standing for 0; so that, instead of marking his goods 12/6, a man would put BL/Pd.

There are also punning cyphers, such as "5 meet me 6 at 5/- 3ft.," which means "Meet me between five and six o'clock, at Crown Yard."

STANLEY B. KING.

THE RACE OF THE SPECIALS.

Narrated by Harry Shepperd, a Royal Train Driver, and Recorded by S. A. Parkes.

ILLUSTRATED BY PAUL HARDY.

I.

I WAS driving the two o'clock express at the time, and my fireman was Tom Long, who had been my mate for several years. Our engine was No. 950, one of the famous "Greyhound" class, which are the finest single-drivers in the world.

They are real beauties and no mistake, with their long, dark green boilers and huge 8ft. driving wheels. If not so good up a stiff bank as coupled engines, they will skip by them on a level road.

I've driven Royalty of all kinds with "950" as my engine, and she's never failed me yet; so you can understand I feel pretty well at home on her foot-plate, and know her good and bad points like jockeys do those of a horse.

We had got off rather early from the sheds that afternoon, and were waiting in the sidings, just outside our London terminus, ready to run in and hook on to our train.

"FORTY-FIVE SECONDS!" SAID THE INSPECTOR. "BY JOVE, THAT'S EIGHTY MILES AN HOUR!"

I have always made it a rule to thoroughly examine my locomotive while it is over the engine pits, and never to let even the smallest trimming be overlooked; so, my mind being easy as to big-ends and other troublesome bearings, I was glancing again through the "Weekly Working Sheet," to make certain that there were no alterations in the signals or the line which would affect me in working the express.

On looking up from my reading, I noticed the station master and another man coming towards the sidings across the network of rails.

"Tom!" said I to my fireman, "here's a rich uncle coming along. No more firing for you, my boy!"

"If that's so," replied Tom, laughing, as he wiped his hands on some oily waste, "I'll have to titivate up a bit. Why don't the company fix looking-glasses on the top of the water gauges?"

"Yes," said I, "and put wash-hand basins under the test cocks?"

It didn't occur to either of us that we were really the people wanted, until the station master hailed me and climbed up the steps to the foot-plate, followed by his companion.

"We've serious work for you to-day," said the station master when they were up beside us; "this gentleman is Inspector Stafford, of Scotland Yard, whom you are to take with you on your engine."

You may be sure I had a good stare at the man when I heard this, for he was the detective always employed in international and extradition cases.

He certainly wasn't much to look at, being rather short, with a sallow face, partly covered by a close-cut beard and moustache; but his eyes were very bright and had a curious twinkle

in them, as if he were about to make a joke and was having a private grin at it first.

"Very well, sir," I answered; "we're just going now to hook on to the train."

"You're not to take the Scotsman to-day," said the station master, "we want you to work a special instead, and start at once."

"Of course you know, sir," I said, "that none of the engines in this siding could keep time with the Scotsman."

"I remembered that," he answered, "and telephoned your foreman at the running-sheds. Luckily, he had another 'Greyhound' in steam, and it will be up here in plenty of time to take the Scotsman."

"Where are we to go?" I asked.

"I had better tell you that," said Stafford, and, drawing Tom and myself under the shelter of the cab, he spoke rapidly in a low voice.

"An hour or so ago, a man, professing to be a rich American, came to Mr. Wilson here," pointing to the station master, "and ordered a special to Manchester."

"It's been gone about twenty minutes," interrupted Tom; "we passed it as we came up."

"I know that," said the inspector grimly, "I just missed it by two minutes. Unless I am much mistaken, this American is no more a Yankee than I am; he's a Boer spy that we've been hunting this last fortnight."

"Can't you wire and have the special stopped?" I asked.

"I daren't. My case is not complete enough, and there are others I want to catch."

"What will you do, then?"

"Overtake that special and make sure I'm on the right tack. Can you do it?"

"It's had a long start, but I'll try my best," I told him.

"If Shepperd says that," said the station master, "you may know it can be done. Before I left my office I had a message sent along the line to switch them on to the slow road, which should prevent them breaking a record, and by starting now you will get off in front of the Scotsman on the fast line."

"There's not time, then, to couple on a break-van to steady us?" I said.

"No," replied the station master, "you must run as a light engine."

He shook hands with the inspector, assured him that the company would help him in any way they could, and left us with a cheerful word of farewell. I whistled for the signal, and a minute later we ran out of the siding and were off on our strange chase.

The first few miles we had to pass over a very crowded part of the line, and there was little time to talk as we slipped by the numerous suburban stations; but when the endless rows of houses were at last left behind, the inspector gave us some further details of the case.

"For some months past," he said, "we have had several men under observation, but were unable to identify the real leader who pulled the strings so cunningly behind the scenes. Even now we are none too sure, because the American who ordered the special was very different in appearance to Holtzgang; but a small—I may say, a very small—peculiarity was common to both men, and it was enough to bring me flying over the country after him."

"What was that, sir?"

"Ah!" replied the inspector, "I'll tell you when I've caught him."

By this time we were well out into the country, with green fields and hedges on either side of the line, so I opened the regulator to its full extent and fairly let the engine go.

We rattled across the long viaduct which carries the train high above the valley, and came to a fine stretch of line with a slightly falling gradient, where the down expresses are timed for their fastest work.

I'd put my trust in "950," and she didn't disappoint me, racing over the metals with her whole frame swaying and lifting, leaving behind a long cloud of smoke to mark her track. Presently we saw a local train far ahead on the slow line; caught it up and passed it as if it had been standing still, though its "four-coupled" tank-engine was fussing along at nearly forty miles an hour with noisy puffings of its exhaust, and it soon became a speck in the distance.

The inspector grew interested when the speed increased, and, steadying himself with one hand against the rocking of the engine, held his watch in the other, counting the seconds as we flashed past the mile-posts.

Meanwhile, Tom was fully occupied in keeping the fire going and watching the water-gauges, so as to be prompt in turning on the injectors, and thus keep the water well above the tell-tale plug, whose melting is so much dreaded by the careless driver.

"Fifty-two seconds!" said the inspector, referring to the time for the last mile; then, joyfully, "Forty-nine!" and three minutes later he almost shouted, "Forty-five seconds! By Jove! we shall soon catch 'em—that's eighty miles an hour!"

But as he spoke a distant signal at danger obliged me to shut off steam to get my engine under control for the stop we should

have to make if the home signal was also against us.

"I counted my chicks too soon," said the inspector, dolefully.

"Never mind, sir. We'll get some information, any way."

We were passing the signal-box then, for the signalman had put his head out, and waved to us to go on "at caution"; so I called out to him: "How long has the passenger special on the down slow road gone by?"

"Fourteen minutes," came back the reply, and it cheered us greatly, since it showed that we had knocked off half the other's start in the first sixty miles.

"They haven't been napping, either," I said, "for we've averaged near a mile a minute all the way, and in the London section no one must run over thirty miles an hour."

The advanced starting signal now being "off," we were able to move on again, but had very little luck; for first we had to slow down to ten miles an hour in a section where the engineer was lifting the line, and then were checked again for three minutes while a goods was being shunted for the Scotsman.

At last we reached Longmoor Junction, and, at the inspector's request, I pulled up for a moment at the platform by the station master's office.

Leaving Tom on the engine, the inspector and I went in to make inquiries.

"The special left three minutes ago," the station master told us.

"What?" exclaimed the inspector. "Only three minutes ago?"

"Yes, the saloon had a hot axle-box, so they stopped to cool it down."

"Did you see the passenger?"

"Oh, yes!"

"What was he like?"

"A tall man with a goatee beard—a Yankee, by his talk."

"You had some conversation, then?"

"Yes, he asked me if his special couldn't run from here on the fast line."

"Did you agree?"

"No; I had just had word from London to keep the fast road clear for your engine, if possible; so I told him that, and pointed out that, as his special would have to go slow at first for fear of over-heating the axle again, it would block the way."

"Oh! you told him another special was expected?"

"Yes."

The inspector looked vexed.

"What did he say to that?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"He merely thanked me for my information, and said he thought he'd have some tea sent out to him from the refreshment room."

There was no more news to be had, so we got on the engine again, and started off without further delay. I could see the inspector was rather troubled that our friend in front should know of another special following him.

"I wonder if he guesses we're on his track?" he muttered half to himself.

"May be not, sir," I replied; "if it is your gent, he doesn't know yet, or he wouldn't have taken it so coolly."

"There she is!" cried Tom, and about two miles ahead we saw a short train, which was the special, without a doubt.

I put full steam on, and we all watched the distant train in growing excitement.

"She's not doing more than fifteen miles an hour," I said.

"How do you know that, at this distance?" asked the inspector.

"Because each puff of smoke is distinct; if she were running fast the puffs would follow so quickly as to make one continued cloud."

"Afraid of the axle?" asked the inspector.

"Probably," I answered.

We steadily gained on the special, and had almost overtaken it, when we came to the short cutting which ends in the long Deadland Tunnel.

"We'll be in the tunnel first," said Tom; so I had to slow down to avoid overshooting her, and she entered the tunnel a hundred yards ahead.

"That's queer," I said.

"What?" asked the inspector sharply.

"They never whistled as they went in; it's a warning to anyone in the tunnel which no engineman should forget to give."

I gave a long hoot on our own whistle as we went into the dark, smoky burrow, whose roof and walls glistened with moisture.

Deadland Tunnel is over a mile in length, and has a bad name among drivers, for, owing to the excessive damp, the air is always very foul; it has, besides, the reputation of being haunted by the ghost of a woman who was thrown out of a train there many years ago.

The tail lights of the other special shone out in the blackness, and we steadily crept up till we were level with the saloon.

All the blinds, except one, were down, and the shades were drawn over the lamps, but we were just able to distinguish the figure of a man sitting in the far corner with a travelling cap pulled over his face.

The inspector gave a grunt of satisfaction.

"We shall soon settle our doubts now," he said.

Hardly had he spoken when Tom startled us with a cry of: "Harry, look!"

I followed the direction of his hand, and saw a sight that made me shiver.

We were now up to the other engine, and it seemed as if one could almost have stepped on to her, so short was the distance between us.

Their fire-door was partly open, and the furnace threw a red glow on the figures of two men on the foot-plate, and lit up the dripping wall beyond.

The driver was hanging limply over the reversing wheel, like some huge sawdust doll, and, though the fireman was leaning against the tender in an attitude that might imply laziness, his eyes appeared to be closed, and soon a lurch of the engine caused him to slide down on to the floor in a horribly stiff way.

I blew our whistle again loudly, but the men took no notice, though the noise echoed again and again with a shrill metallic sound.

Their engine went on at a steadily increasing speed, the steam hissing from the safety valve, and the pantings of the steam-blast growing quicker and quicker; while the awful blackness around made the figures of the two men stand out as the firelight fell on them, and at times the shaking of the train gave their limbs an appearance of life.

It was an uncanny sight, and as I looked at it I tried in vain to understand what it could all mean. Presently the inspector gripped my arm, and, as if in answer to my unspoken question, said hoarsely in my ear the word:—

"*Drugged!*"

II.

I DON'T think anyone would call me a superstitious man, but I must own to feeling precious queer while we were in that dismal tunnel, and it was like the lifting of a safety valve to see a faint speck of light in the distance, which showed we were near the end.

Once out in the fresh air again I got my nerve back, and was able to think of what should be done.

It wasn't a rosy outlook, to say the least of it; side by side with us was running an engine with none to control her, and, though she hadn't full steam on and was "notched up" a tidy bit, there was quite enough speed on her to make a nasty smash with anything she met. I had caught sight of the distant signal for the slow road, and it was at danger, which meant that the special had got to be stopped somehow within the next twelve hundred yards.

When I was quite a lad I'd been shipped off to sea as an apprentice for three years; the experience I gained then had often been useful to me in railway work, and it gave me an idea now which I wasn't slow to act on.

In the tool-box was a short piece of light rope, which I had out in a moment, and made a large noose at one end.

"What's the game, mate?" asked Tom.

"I'm going to chuck this noose over the dome of that engine and climb across to it by the rope—see?"

Tom saw my object at once, but the inspector asked, "Won't the dome be too hot?"

"Bless you, no!" answered Tom. "What you see's only the outside covering; there's a lagging of wood underneath before you get to the boiler."

We were level with the other's steam-dome then, so I made a cast and succeeded in dropping the noose over it the first attempt.

I took a turn of the rope round the handrail outside our cab and gave the inspector the end to hold.

"Keep it taut when I'm on it," I said, "but pay it out sharp if either engine gets ahead."

He nodded as he gripped the rope, and I knew he understood.

Tom had gripped the regulator handle in one hand and the brake ejector in the other, and was keeping the two engines together like horses in harness.

"Let me go!" he said.

"No!" I replied, and he saw it was no use arguing.

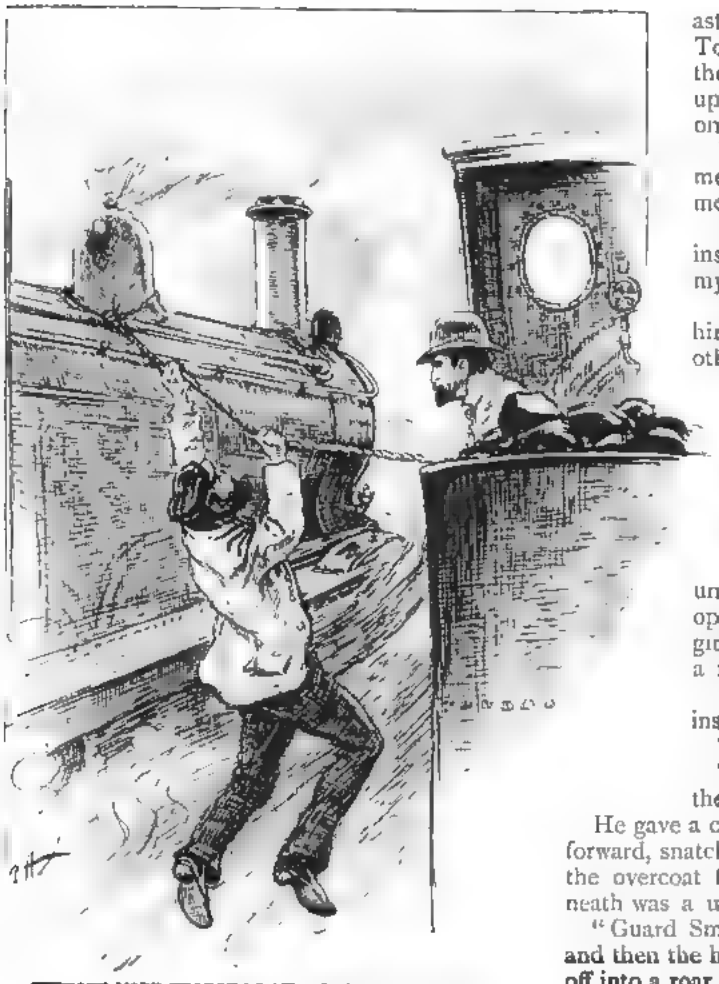
"Watch it, Tom," I told him.

"Right, Harry."

I seized the rope with both hands, prepared to give myself a good send-off, and then for ten seconds I hesitated, the job looked so tricky. I am heavily built, and it flashed across me that if the rope broke I should be thrown under the wheels of one or other engine; you see, my nerves were still a bit queer. Luckily, at that instant I looked away over the level tract of country we were crossing, and there ahead was the smoke of a train I knew to be a heavy goods toiling along the slow down line.

Without more thought I swung myself off the tender and started across, hand over hand, as quickly as I could. The rope sagged badly when I was in the middle, and I felt myself slipping away as fast as I moved my hands.

Our engine had dropped behind a trifle, and the inspector had paid out the rope too much!



WITHOUT MORE THOUGHT I SWUNG MYSELF OFF THE TENDER.

The wind whistled in my ears, and I found my legs dangling within a yard of the great wheels of the runaway engine. My hands became clammy and moist, my breath came in jerks, and I seemed to have lost the power of going forward or back. The next instant the rope tightened. I made a big effort, and landed myself panting on the running-plate.

I quickly slipped the noose off the dome and climbed round to the foot-plate, nearly falling over the fireman, who was now lying flat on his back.

There was no time to be lost, for the signal-box was close at hand, and in the next block the goods train was shunting out trucks from a siding.

I shut off steam and applied the vacuum brake, bringing the train to a stand at the home signal, the signalman looking out in astonishment from his window. Tom stopped "950" alongside, and the inspector got off her and climbed up to me, while Tom kept an eye on the saloon.

We hastily loosened the two men's clothes and put them in more comfortable positions.

"They're coming to," said the inspector. "I must tackle that mystery in the saloon."

He went to the door nearest him, and I placed myself at the other in case our friend inside tried to give us the slip.

All the blinds but one being down, the saloon was nearly dark, so all that could be seen of the man at the far end was that he was wrapped in a light overcoat, little of his face showing under his cap. The inspector, opening the door, stepped in rather gingerly, and I saw the gleam of a revolver barrel in his hand.

"Mr. Holtzgang!" said the inspector loudly.

There was no answer.

The inspector pulled up two of the blinds and let in more light.

He gave a cry of astonishment, then stepped forward, snatched off the cap, and pulled away the overcoat from the sleeping man. Underneath was a uniform I knew well.

"Guard Smith, by thunder!" I called out, and then the hoax tickled my fancy, and I went off into a roar of laughter.

To do the inspector justice, he took his set-down well, and joined me in a good laugh when he had recovered himself a bit.

"I feared something of the sort," he said, as he helped me to bring the guard to life again.

"They have all been drugged?" I asked.

For answer the inspector took a teacup from the table and handed it to me.

The cup was almost empty, but a faint, sickly smell still remained.

"It's a fair knock-out," I said. "How do you think it was managed?"

"Simply enough," replied the inspector. "You heard the station master say that Holtzgang had some tea sent out to him; well, he doctored it up and gave the driver and fireman a cup each just before they started, then he invited the guard into the saloon and filled him up with his little concoction. It was easy enough to drop off the train, which was running very slowly on account of the axle trouble,

leaving the guard as his substitute. 'Hullo! what have we here?"

He had been feeling in the pockets of the light overcoat, and now produced some papers and glanced eagerly at them.

The reading gave him much satisfaction, and he turned to me with a joyful twinkle in his eyes.

"Even a clever man may be too sharp," he said. "When our friend Holtzgang left his overcoat behind he also left these papers, which are worth everything to me. I have sufficient evidence now to complete my case."

"But you've lost your bird," I couldn't help saying.

"That's true," answered the inspector sadly, "and he's left uncommon little trace."

At that moment a call came from Tom.

"Harry! the Scotsman's two blocks off and the signalman wants the line clear. What shall I do?"

"Cross over to our road," I shouted, "and hook on to us."

There were trailing points a little way on from the fast to the slow road, so he easily managed this, and, by the time he had coupled up, the inspector and I had removed the two men from the engine and placed them in the saloon with the guard. They were all conscious by that time, though so dazed and muddled that they could give no account of what had happened; but we knew pretty well all there was to be known.

The inspector remained in the saloon, and Tom and I ran the train back to Longmoor Junction, which was what we had decided to do.

"I'D KNOW THAT VOICE ANYWHERE," HE CRIED.

This took us a considerable time, for we were obliged to go on some distance and then wait a suitable interval in the traffic, as there was no "scissors" crossing near, by which we could have done the trick quickly.

It was getting on for half-past five, and nearly dark before we reached the junction again. A train was standing on one side of the "island" platform when we ran in on the other.

"Hullo!" said I, "that's the cross-country Continental to Harwich; she ought to have been gone half an hour ago."

"We came in late," explained the head guard, "and just as we were starting again a piston ring broke, the driver tells me. Anyhow, though he could move his engine by itself, he couldn't stir the train. We've got another engine coming on in a minute, then we're off sharp. Are you going by it, sir?"

This remark was addressed to the inspector, who had got out of the saloon, and was looking down the long line of lighted carriages.

Suddenly I saw him stiffen like a dog of mine always does when it smells game, and he rushed in the direction of the booking office.

"What's up with the chap?" asked the guard, and then he noticed our turn-out, and wanted to know why we were running tender first, what we did with a pilot engine on, and where the enginemen had got to.

Before I had time to answer, I saw Stafford come running back, followed by a station police inspector. They went straight to a first-class smoking carriage almost opposite us and flung open the door.

"Mr. Holtzgang," said Inspector Stafford, in a loud voice, "I must ask you to get out."

There were three passengers in the compartment, but none of them stirred.

"I want that gentleman," said the inspector, pointing to an old man with a grey beard sitting in the far corner. "If you don't come out, sir, I shall have to use force."

On this the old fellow got out. "My name is not Holtzgang," he said, hotly. "You shall pay dearly for disturbing me in this way."

He was smoking a long cigar, which he kept twisting round in his mouth, and his hand seemed to shake with rage. Suddenly a man lurched across the platform and seized the old fellow by the shoulder.

It was the guard of the special, very shaky, but quite clear again in his speech.

"I'd know that voice anywhere," he cried. "This is the chap that hocussed me, though he hadn't grey hair then."

With this he suddenly tugged at the old chap's beard, and it came away, leaving the face of a clean-shaven, middle-aged man behind it.

A crowd had now assembled, and heads were thrust out of every window in the train.

"Now, Mr. Holtzgang," said the inspector, firmly, "I must ask you to accompany me to London, where these various matters can be gone into."

The man said nothing, and followed the inspector quietly to the saloon which he had occupied only a little time before.

We had plenty of coal, and could pick up water from the troughs on the way, so we weren't long in getting off, and landed our passengers in London by eight o'clock.

As I said good-bye to the inspector, I asked him a question.

"Would you mind telling me how you spotted the chap?"

"Certainly I will. Do you remember my saying he had a small peculiarity?"

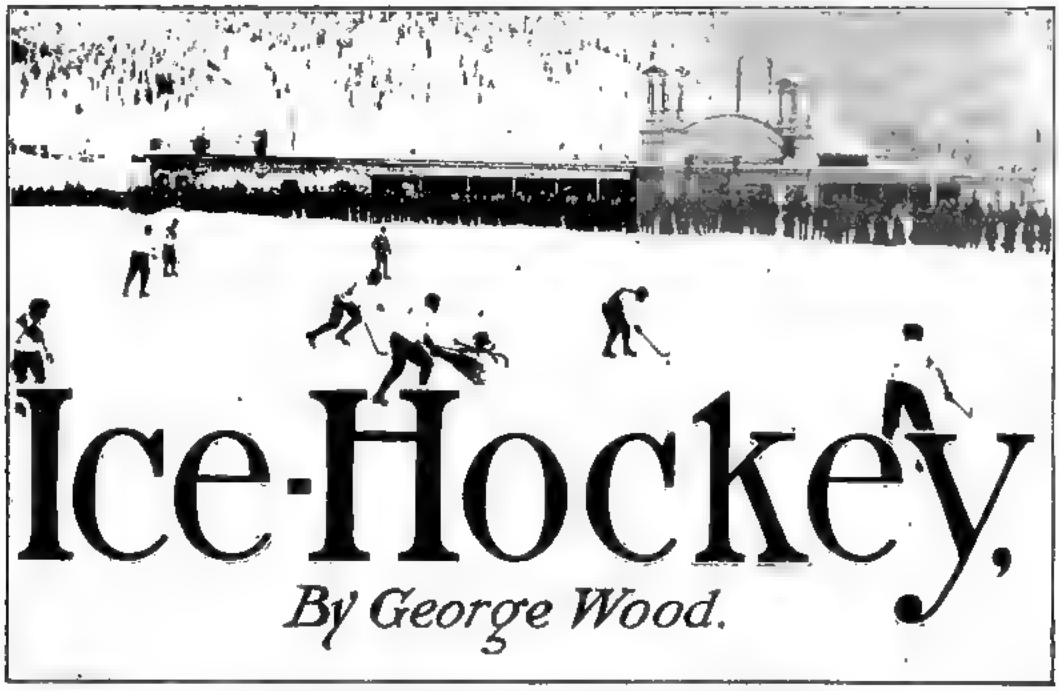
"Yes, I do," said I.

"Luckily for us detectives, people are often ignorant of their own little tricks. Holtzgang is an inveterate smoker."

"There's nothing uncommon in that," I said, "I do a good bit of smoking myself."

"Quite so," said the inspector, with a twinkle, "but Holtzgang has a weakness for cigars, and an unusual habit of twirling them round in his mouth with his thumb and first finger. I had noted that before he disappeared, and, though it wasn't much to go on, small things in our profession frequently lead to great ends, and this time it was a cigar end which did the trick."

Photograph by] **TAKING A CENTRE.** *[O. Reisch, Davos.*



Ice-Hockey.

By George Wood.

A clever pose. The player in the centre is running on the toes of his skates.

NATURALLY, perhaps, one compares "bandy," or ice-hockey, with the land game, and it would seem that the advantage rests with the former. It is an infinitely faster game as played on ice; the dribbling is more effective, since the stick can be used either fore or back-hand; the passing is faster and can be made more accurate, owing to the more level surface; there is but little hitting in the air, so that "sticks," so frequent in the land game, occurs but seldom on the ice.

For the full eleven-aside game the ground should not be less than 150yds. by 100yds., but it is generally difficult to find as large an area of good ice as this, so that ground and players are reduced together. This, however, can be done without in any way spoiling the game; indeed, eight or nine aside is almost better than eleven. In Switzerland, at the English resorts, Davos and St. Moritz, bandy is in great favour, one of the great events of each year being the match between the two places. Germans and natives join in the fun, and show their appreciation of the game by the excellence of their play. At Davos the ground is 90yds. by 60yds., and it is usual to play eight aside. At St. Moritz, on a ground about 10yds. more either way, another player is added.

The bandy itself is shaped just like the land hockey stick, but it is very much lighter, made generally of ⅝in. wood. Measured along the edge, it must not exceed 4ft. in length; within this limit players suit themselves as regards length: as a rule a forward will use a lighter and shorter stick than a back. It is a good plan to bind 7ins. or 8ins. of the handle, in order to get a better grip. The ball is of solid indiarubber, 2¼ins. to 2⅜ins. diameter, and should be painted red for black ice. The goal posts are 12ft. apart, with the cross-bar 7ft. from the ice. Care should be taken that the supports of the goal posts lie out of the field of play.

The game is started by the umpire throwing the ball vertically up in the air in mid-field. It is in play directly it has touched the ice. Out of touch the ball is hit in any direction except forward, and no player may stand within 5yds. of the line except the striker. At a corner, the side whose goal is being attacked must be behind their goal line when the ball is struck off. When the ball is hit off from behind, no player of the opposing side must be within 25yds. of that goal line. The off-side rule is three for a full side; for eight or nine players it should be reduced to two. No player can be off-side in his own half of the ground. The ball may be stopped with any part of the body or bandy, but not with the hand when the ball is actually on

Photograph by] A RUN DOWN THE LEFT WING *[C. Reisch, Davos.*

the ice, except in the case of the goal-keeper. No kicking, charging, tripping, or hooking of sticks is allowed.

The field is arranged just as in "socker" football, but it is a question whether it is not advisable to strengthen the defence at the expense of the forwards, putting four halves instead of three. With eight aside, there are goal-keep, two backs, two halves, three forwards; with nine aside, another half is introduced—at St. Moritz they play one back only and four forwards.

There is very little hitting in bandy, partly because of the pace at which the ball travels on smooth ice, which makes a hit risky, and partly owing to its inaccuracy; the stroke usually adopted is a "sweep," the stick being in actual contact with the ball for some little distance on the ice. Great pace can be got by this stroke, and perfect accuracy, the ball never leaving the ice. However, at times it pays to get the ball up, and then a sort of lofting shot is adopted, the ball either being shovelled up, as it were, or else hit with a wrist shot, much as a ball is lofted in golf. This is especially useful from the goal hit-off, if the goaler can loft the ball over the opposing forwards' heads. In one match, between Davos and St. Moritz, the Davos goal-keeper, Dr. Conan Doyle, proved a great stumbling block—in more ways than one—by laying full length on the ice and propelling himself in this position backwards and forwards across the goal: the St. Moritzers found that they could not hit through him, but at last they took to lofting over him. The goal-keeper must keep his bandy in his hand, but otherwise he may use hands or feet, or anything else as he likes. Of course, when he has saved he should hit the ball out to the wings.

Throughout, the game is very like association football in principle, except for the play of the full backs. These should never leave their goal, but, lying up 10yds. or 15yds. in front of it, must devote themselves entirely to the defence, trying to prevent a direct shot at goal. The game is so fast that, if the backs follow up the halves in attack, as in football, and are passed, they stand little or no chance of catching up an averagely fast forward before he has had a clear chance. With two exceptionally fast backs, one may go up a bit to help the halves, the other covering the goal, but even then it is very risky. It is this awful pace of the game that makes "half" a very trying position. He has to feed his forwards, and has to back them up in attack, and yet at any moment he may have to turn and fly down the ground as hard as he can go to arrive in time to help his backs against the opposing forwards. He must play absolutely unselfishly, and give up any idea of a showy dribble on his own, for if he loses the ball it means a very big opening for the opposition; so he must always make certain of transferring to one of his own forwards without risking being tackled himself. Knowledge of football helps a half a good deal, teaching him the right place to intercept a pass, but so accurate can the passing be made that he must not trust too much to this.

The outside halves have to watch the wing men, and should keep between them and the insides on the chance of catching a pass, and in order at the same time to keep the "winger"

out. A shot from the wing is comparatively harmless, owing to the small size of the goal, and if the winger centres there should be a good chance of the centre half getting on to it. The centre half has to devote himself to the centre forward, hampering his shots, and forcing him to pass out to the wings, especially near goal. Of course, pace is essential for a half, and the power of turning quickly, so that the stronger the man is on his skates the better. If he has the legs of his wing forwards he may tackle them directly, trusting to his superior pace to have more than one bite at his cherry. In tackling, the man should hold his stick straight in front of him, with the head of it on the ice, using both hands, so that he can dart his stick out to either side with either hand singly when he sees on which side the forward means to try to pass him. In mid-field the halves should feed their wing players, near goal the centre and insides, and, if they can learn to loft the ball, they should not be chary of shooting for themselves. The Canadians indulge a good deal in high, slow shots, lofting the ball 30ft. or more in the air, the forwards then rushing the backs and goaler.

Forward, the wing men should be fast, and should keep well out on the lines in order to spread the opposing halves. If they get a good opening they must run for themselves, bearing inwards a little towards the goal. The centre must be made 10yds. or more from the goal line, and, as a rule, it pays to centre a little back, so that the centre forward can meet the ball. This, however, depends a good deal on the pace of the centre forward. This player has to feed his wings except when nearing goal, when he must keep the ball in, using his inside men, or, if he is really clever, he may go for it himself and dribble. All he wants to get is an unhampered shot with the goal open to him so far as the full backs are concerned. He does not need to dribble the ball right through into the net.

The centre and inside forwards must be ready to adopt any sort of stroke for their shot. The sweep keeps the ball on the floor, and is easy to stop if the goaler can get to it; the wrist hit is perhaps the most useful shot, which lofts the ball 5ft. or 6ft. off the ice. Forwards should accustom themselves to use either hand, both for dribbling and passing; in centreing the wing men should adopt the sweep, using both hands. It is the business of the forwards to give their halves a chance of passing to them, coming back, if necessary, and making certain that they are clear to receive the pass without its being intercepted on the way. The passing must be all along the ground, quick, and always in front of the player to whom it is directed, so that he may take it at full speed. It has been said that a centre forward may go for it himself, and, indeed, nothing breaks the heart of a side so much as having an opponent come clean through on his own, but it must be done with great discretion. One excellent dodge there is for a centre, if he gets away with anyone of his side to back him up closely: Let him skate straight for goal, with his friend 2yds. behind him; when he is 3yds or 4yds. from the backs, who will almost certainly move close in to one another to make the tackle more

Photograph by] THE BACK PREPARES TO GO IN. [*C. Reisch, Davos.*

secure and to cover more of the goal, let him stop the ball, leaving it for the man behind him, himself skating out to one side or the other with his bandy still on the ice. The backs will most probably follow him instinctively, leaving the goal open.

Many of the St. Moritz players run on the toes of their skates, getting up great pace in this way in a very short distance, but it needs a good deal of practice and is dangerous to the skater if the ice is at all chippy. On bad ice it pays to wear a pair of knee-pads, though on good, sound ice it is astonishing how seldom an averagely good skater falls. Skates should be mounted a little higher than usual, as with the ordinary height in turning quickly one is liable to get on to the side of the boot, which leads to a very uncomfortable slip, if not to an actual fall.

Ordinary figure skates do very well, but better, still a pair made with slightly longer blades and quite flat on the ice.

HOW BOYS CAN BE MADE USEFUL.

"WAIT till the boys come home!" This becomes quite a catch-word during the term when one's brothers are at school. There are so many ways in which boys can be made useful; and nice ones are generally only too pleased to make themselves so, when at home. They ought to remember that their holidays are the only times the home-folk have a chance of seeing them, and their ambition should be to make a good impression! Waiting at luncheon, for instance, is one thing we always make them do! This makes them thoughtful for others, and quick in their movements. Besides, it is infinitely nicer than having the servants in to wait.

AS CHAPERONES, ETC.

Again, boys can be of great use at various functions—garden-parties in the summer and dances in the winter holidays. As a rule they hate the former, unless they manage to get into a good tennis set. As for dances, well, nearly everybody, boys included, *loves* them, though I am not saying boys don't prefer them at other people's houses rather than at their own. But this is selfish; and the least they can do is to be of some use when their parents turn the whole household upside down in order to give them pleasure.

A boy with a turn for carpentering is the most useful creature I know. You can make him mend all the broken furniture in the house, hang up your pictures, etc., etc. At Christmas time he helps with the decorations, and, really, some boys have quite a taste for arranging flowers!

Another thing whereby a boy can be of the very greatest use to his sisters (especially if they are not "out") is in chaperoning them. In London, for example, it is often thought highly improper for a girl of sixteen to walk about alone; but let her brother (however young he may be) volunteer to go with her, and *voila!* I have had personal experience of this; and even a boy of eight years old was invaluable when you particularly wanted to go down Brompton Road. Whatever they may tell you to the contrary, they really enjoy taking their sisters out immensely, especially if the same young ladies are at all pretty.

The boy of the present day is an excellent judge of feminine beauty, and you may be fairly sure of a sound opinion from him on whether you are "looking your best," or not. Look at the public school boy on the breaking-up day. He picks out the prettiest of his lady friends and strolls round with her, to the secret discomfiture of many other fellows, who are trying in vain to show off their exceedingly plain cousins or aunts.

Those boys who have any talent for music can find time in the holidays for practice, and should avail themselves of the chance. A comic song or a popular waltz is very enjoyable after dinner to help entertain your friends, and the latter is always welcome as a supper extra at a small dance in the country; more especially so if the boy can play "without his music." Nothing can equal a good "boy's voice," and his mother or sister will always be willing to help a

boy with his singing, if he is not too "slack" to learn.

Every country boy should be able to drive, bicycle, shoot, fish, etc. The first is always useful for fetching people from the station, etc., and it is very convenient to be able to rely on a male member of the family for a fresh rabbit or trout, if the keeper is ill or the fishmonger fails you.

In fact, there are innumerable ways in which boys can be of use; for what *are* they for but to run messages and look after the fair sex?

"O."

"ON THE WHOLE, VERY USEFUL ANIMALS."

I think, properly speaking, that some boys are made for usefulness, others for the very opposite. I have five brothers, and in that horde of five there is only one really useful boy. The others have their turn at being useful now and again, which rarely happens.

In *one* way boys are nearly always useful—they will generally join in a game if one asks them, more especially if the game happens to be out of doors. Boys are useful in knocking the conceit out of their sisters. They are useful in seeing girls home from parties. One way in which boys are very useful is in running messages, which I think boys are made for; but sometimes, alas! their lordships *will not go!*

Boys are useful in teaching their sisters pluck, and in cultivating a sense of fair play and honour. A girl has a far jollier time when she either has a lot of brothers or knows a lot of boys. Some boys are handy in making nice things out of odd scraps of wood.

They are useful, too, for going long country walks, and for teaching games, such as cricket, tennis, and footer.

Some people think that boys should be trained to be even more useful than they are—that they should learn to "net," possibly to knit, to sew and darn a little, for nowadays, when people wander so far through the world, a man might find himself very badly off if he did not know some of these things. Most boys know how to handle a few tools, so they are often able to do a little thing for themselves or others.

In keeping the house jolly and lively there is nothing like a set of boys. A girl having brothers is taught to look out for her own rights, as a boy usually treats a girl in the same way as he would another boy.

Taken on the whole, boys are usually very useful animals, so long as they don't give themselves airs and think they are better than girls which they know they are not.

One great use of boys is that they grow up to be men and carry on the work of the world.

In this sense, too, the proverb is true that "the boy is father of the man."

J. B.

ANOTHER PLEA FOR CARPENTRY.

Boys can be made useful in many ways, if only they are moderately intelligent and willing. Now a clever carpenter is invaluable in a family, particularly where there are many children or careless servants. If the leg of a chair or table is broken the mother need only tell her son, and, if he is obliging, it is mended in about half-an-hour. If, however, he will not do as he is asked, a carpenter has to be fetched, and worry and expense take the place of comfort. Besides, if he is a kind brother he will take his younger brothers and sisters out for a walk, thus saving the servants' and his parents' time when, perhaps, they are in the middle of spring-cleaning or other pressing work, which they would have to leave to take out the little ones. If he happens to live in the country, the boy can often be useful shooting rabbits and game, which furnish an agreeable change in the larder, when, perhaps, it is difficult to get a variety of things, owing to distance from a large town, difficulty of carriage, and many other causes. If he is willing to let his sisters participate in his amusements, he can afford them hours of enjoyment by letting them go out shooting with him, assist at his photography experiments, or accompany him out fishing or boating.

Although boys are often very fond of "sitting upon" their sisters, yet the latter do not, as a rule, I think, find them very disagreeable or unkind, particularly after they have reached the age of fifteen, when they are at a public school, as a rule, and are quite juniors and of little importance. This is a great change to many boys, as they have often been at the top of their preparatory school for some time before leaving, and have been of comparatively great importance. I think I have now said all I can about the usefulness of boys, which I think is very great if only they are willing to help.

N. W.

"FOR KILLING MICE."

No doubt I shall be voicing the opinion of all your girl-readers when I express gratitude to you, Mr. Editor, for allowing us this opportunity of showing the "boy" world how it may make itself useful.

I must confess, at the outset, that perhaps girls are rather too prone to imagine that they are invaluable to the opposite sex, and, in fact, that the latter would be utterly paralysed were their presence to be withdrawn from this terrestrial globe, yet I myself have seen a boy thread a needle and sew on a button in less than an hour, without pricking his finger more than six times, or using more than four yards of cotton!

Though I do not consider it right that a boy should be asked to assist in cooking his dinner or dusting rooms, he can help in the house in other ways. Should a picture require hanging, he should be ready with hammer and nail, and especially during the season of spring-cleaning can a boy be useful in this way. I might here mention that if a parent wishes his boy to grow up a useful man, and not merely an ornamental one, he should by all means have him taught carpentering; though the parent may feel reluctant to bear the expense, yet many a carpenter's bill will be saved in the future. As a carpenter's shop is attached to most large schools, there should be no difficulty in the way.

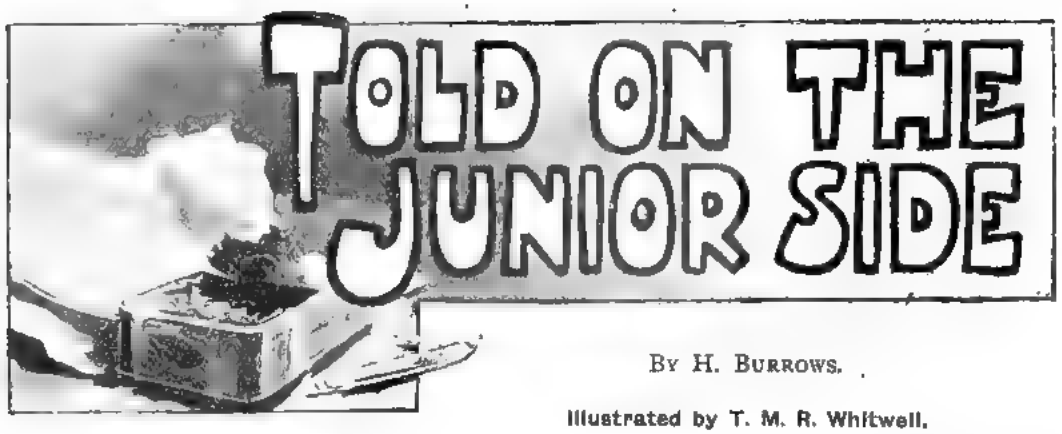
Messages—a boy can scarcely make himself more useful than by always being willing to run messages, even though, at the time the call comes, he may be deeply engrossed in the latest number of THE CAPTAIN.

To act as an escort to his sisters is a duty which every boy ought to consider an honour—more often than not he looks upon it in quite another light. Let him console himself with the thought that he is making himself useful!

It was at a Woman's Rights meeting; they had been holding forth on the superiority of their sex, when an agonised shriek arose from the platform—the chair(wo)man had espied a mouse! The monster was killed by a despised boy in the audience—thereupon a resolution was passed that, if good for nothing else, Man was at least useful "for killing mice."

W. E. D.

[Very sensible essays. There is a remarkable similarity of opinion among these four young ladies. It seems to be agreed upon that boys ought to be able to turn themselves to carpentering. Let them take the hint.—O. F.]



By H. Burrows.

Illustrated by T. M. R. Whitwell.

II.—THE DODGE THAT FAILED.

EVEN in London a harriers' club is a fruitful source of amusement, whilst in the country its pleasures are so increased that one can only wonder there is not such a club to be found in every village. But of all the forms of this kind of sport nothing to my mind excels the old-fashioned paper chases. In these the hares, as you are probably aware, are provided with bags of finely chopped paper, and given a few minutes' start, whilst the hounds are bound to strictly follow the trail. Hence the hares are chosen not so much for their speed and stamina as for their knowledge of the country and their skill in stratagems. The art of laying a false trail, for instance, is rather a risky business in the hands of a novice. It takes time; and if the hounds once view their prey they are entitled to abandon the trail and run by sight. As a set-off to this, the hares are entitled in that case to abandon their bags, which is no small boon. You never really understand what a bag of paper weighs until you find half a dozen of the swiftest hounds hard on your track and within a few yards of you. At the same time, the hares never abandon their bags if they can help it. For one reason, if they happen to get away, but lose their bags in doing so, the sport necessarily comes to an end for the day. Another reason is that a half-emptied bag of paper, with its contents well shaken to a head, makes a formidable weapon of offence and defence. A skilfully planted blow behind the legs, just below the calf, is calculated to tumble in the dust the most enthusiastic of pursuers. You may take that as the result of experience.

At one time Bannister and I were almost invariably chosen for hares in our school runs, and many were the tricks we played on the misguided hounds. I recollect that on one occasion, when we found ourselves distressed, we made for the river, which we were strictly forbidden to swim or ford. When I speak of a river, you must not imagine one of the width of the Thames at Blackfriars or Westminster. In fact, were you to see the river to which I refer, I fear you would probably stigmatise it as "a mouldy ditch." Still, it was too wide to jump, and usually too deep to wade, and so it served our purpose. As I say, we made for the river, but we did not attempt to cross it. Oh, dear no! We could not think of breaking the rules in that manner. So we sat down on the bank and plugged up a few large lumps of turf. On one we placed a handful of paper, and then covered it over with another clod. Then, with a skilful heft, we landed the burden on the other side, and as the pieces of turf struck the ground and fell asunder, the paper was scattered on the opposite bank. This operation we repeated two or three times, until, so far as appearances went, it certainly looked as if the hares had swum the river, and thoughtfully deposited a large trail on the opposite bank, so that there could be no mistake as to the way they had gone. After that we made tracks along the stream, of course laying the trail as we went. I feel bound to admit that the trail was a thin one, but still it was a trail. As soon as we reached the summit of a small hill, we paused to watch the result of our stratagem. Nor had we long to wait. In a few moments the leading hounds appeared, made straight for the river, and then came to a sudden halt. They seemed to be in anxious consultation, and rather doubtful as to the course they should pursue. Finally, Carter plunged in, quickly followed by the

others, and with serene satisfaction we watched them vainly endeavouring to discover the trail on the other side. Presently some of the slower division commenced to arrive, and, gathering that something was wrong, cast about for and soon discovered the true trail. By this time we were nicely rested, and thought we might as well be jogging on. So we trotted off in leisurely fashion, wisely calculating that we had not much to fear either from the slow pack or from those who were putting up a good deal of extra weight in the shape of water. And as we went we solemnly discussed what (if they should see them) the masters would say to those culprits who had broken the rules by swimming the river.

Having recorded one of our triumphs over the hounds, it seems only fair that I should here relate what I may term "the dodge that failed." It happened in this wise. Amongst the spots that were placed out of bounds were the various woods that studded the country. These woods were ever a sore temptation to us. I recollect that one of our maxims was that if you found a gamekeeper carrying a gun he was quite harmless. The heavy weapon so impeded his movements that it was comparatively safe to exchange civilities at a reasonable distance. But if the gamekeeper carried a stick, then it was well to bolt at once without waiting to inquire after his health. Now on the occasion to which I refer, Bannister and I were feeling dead beat, and were at a loss which way to turn. At last a way out of the difficulty dawned upon me.

"Suppose we take to the woods and chance it?"

"Take to the woods!" quoth Bannister; "why, I can hardly move as it is, and what are we going to do if we meet a keeper?"

"Never mind that," said I, "I'll make that all right."

"Oh!" was the doubting comment.

"Come and see," I added. And Bannister came.

So into the woods we went; and before long we found ourselves face to face with a couple of gamekeepers, armed with most formidable-looking sticks.

"Good morning," said I.

"Oh! *good* morning," said they, and grasped their sticks firmly.

I ventured to remark that it was a warm day. They commenced to tuck up their sleeves, and opined that it would be very warm that day.

"What a shame it is for boys to come through the woods and disturb the game," I said.

They stared agape, then grinned, and were glad I thought so. I fingered a bright sixpence, and said we had come to tell them that a lot of boys were coming through the wood. And they eyed the coin and said, "Oh! are they?" And somehow that sixpence changed hands, and I said that those boys ought to be stopped. And they said they would be stopped. Then they directed us to a path which led out of the wood, and we went on our way in a state of sweet content.

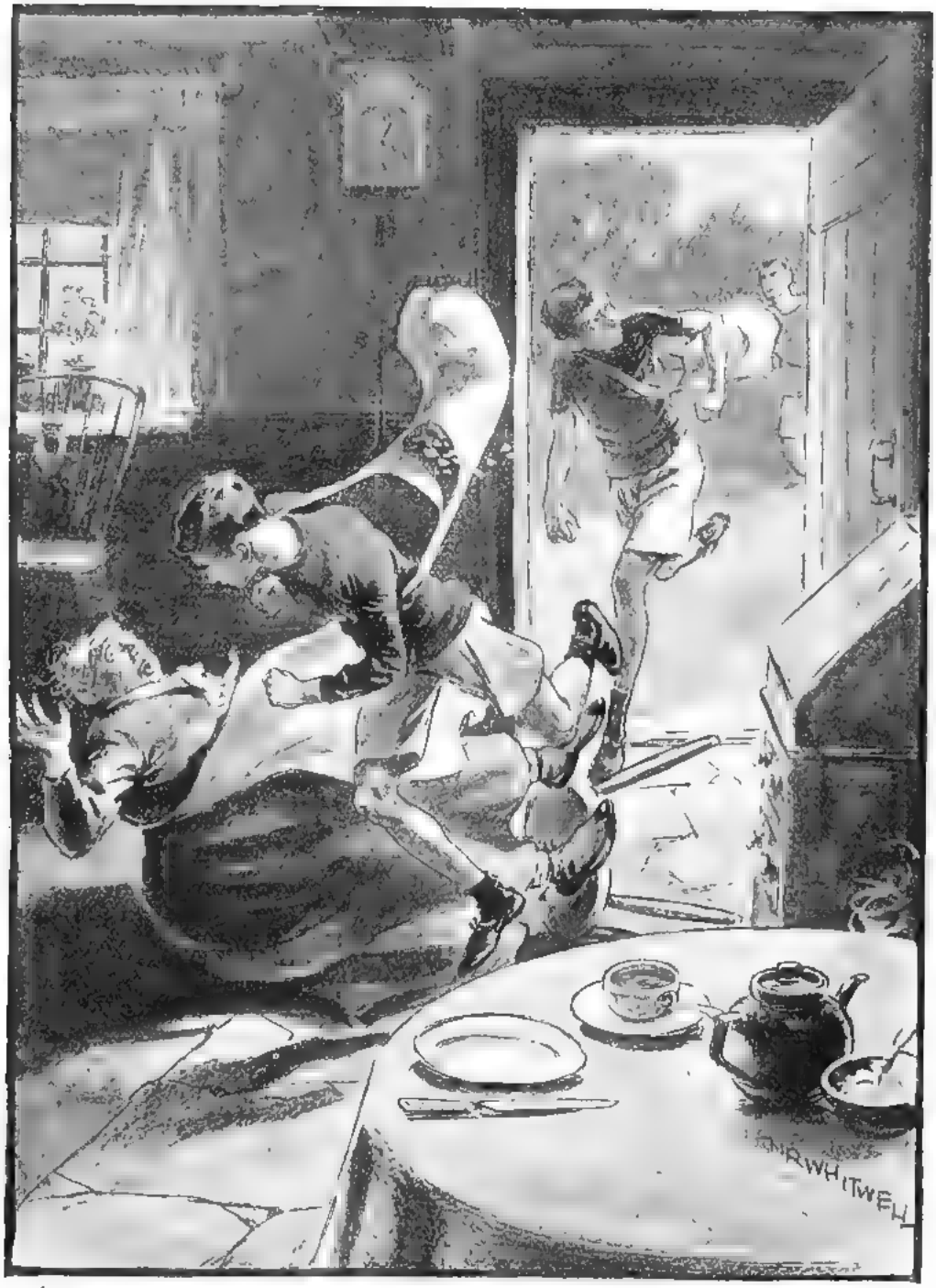
And feeling assured that there was no occasion to hurry, we sauntered along the road until we came to the cottage of a gooseherd ("gozzard"). A gooseherd is one who tends a flock of geese in the same way as a shepherd looks after sheep, and he usually possesses a sort of fold at the back of his cottage, with a small pond in the corner for the use of the geese.

The gooseherd's wife was sitting at the open door, and we were about to exchange a few words when that instinct which warns one of approaching danger caused us to look behind us. Not a moment too soon. Within a few yards of us came Carter and half a dozen of the leading hounds in hot pursuit. Uttering a loud yell, we dashed into the cottage, overturning the old dame, stool and all, in our flight. After us came Carter and the hounds. Through the cottage we fled, and out into the pen, pell-mell amongst the geese, hard followed by the hounds.

The pen was only enclosed by a wooden palisade, which it would have taken but a moment to scale, but that moment was not to be had. Hither and thither we dodged amongst the geese, who ran cackling in all directions, and as we fled we used our bags with great effect to ward off the eager hounds. And after us all came the gooseherd, in impartial pursuit, laying on blows with his stick whenever he saw an opportunity, and uttering many objurgations.

"Oh, ye will come here a-ruining all my geese, will 'ee?" (Whack!) "Ye will come rushing in and knocking my old woman about, will 'ee?" (Whack!) "I'll teach 'ee to come a-trespassing where ye aren't wanted, drat 'ee!" (Whack!)

And after a few minutes of this sport it began to dawn on us that the old gooseherd was having rather the best of it, and that it would be to our interest to unite against the common foe. First Carter abandoned the pursuit, and squared up to the enemy. The gooseherd stepped backwards, and, whirling his stick on high, brought it down with such a vicious cut on Carter's knuckles that they ached for weeks. Then the hares came to the rescue. Bang! went my bag on the fellow's head, and, as he turned to me, Bannister



UTTERING A LOUD YELL, WE DASHED INTO THE COTTAGE.

on the other side planted a skilful blow, which almost brought down the foe. But just as we anticipated a speedy victory, the enemy received unexpected reinforcement in the person of his wife. So long as the gooseherd was administering chastisement, the old dame had been content to watch the proceedings, merely interjecting an occasional "Give it 'em, Jim; let 'em have it again." But when she saw her spouse in jeopardy she dipped her mop-broom in the pail and rushed into the fray.

The first we knew of her advent was when "swish!" went the broom full in Bannister's face, and over went that youth sprawling among the cackling geese. And then confusion became even worse confounded. The gooseherd plied his stick, his wife plied her broom, the hares plied their bags, the hounds capered round and gave what assistance they could; every combatant shouted at the top of his or her voice, and the distracted geese squealed and cackled, and ran to and fro in every direction. And I feel bound to say that of all the combatants the old dame was certainly the most formidable. But at last, by skilful manœuvring, we drove the gooseherd to the very edge of the pond. Bang, bang! went the bags on either side of his head. The enemy reeled, and half a score of frightened geese running blindly between his legs completed the business. Over he went, souse into the pond.

His wife dropped her broom and rushed to the rescue. Hares and hounds alike made for the palisade, and fled across the country at top speed, until they had put a fair distance between themselves and the cottage.

Then we looked round, and saw the old dame shaking her fist after us, whilst by her side stood her disconsolate spouse, dripping from every pore. We kissed our hands in fond adieu, and went upon our way.

And then ensued a wordy warfare between ourselves and the hounds.

"You didn't follow the trail."

"Yes we did, now."

"No, you didn't."

"How do you know?"

"Because you didn't."

"Swear we did!"

"Swear you didn't."

"Bet you."

"Well, you didn't come through the woods."

"Oh, yes, we did; straight through the woods."

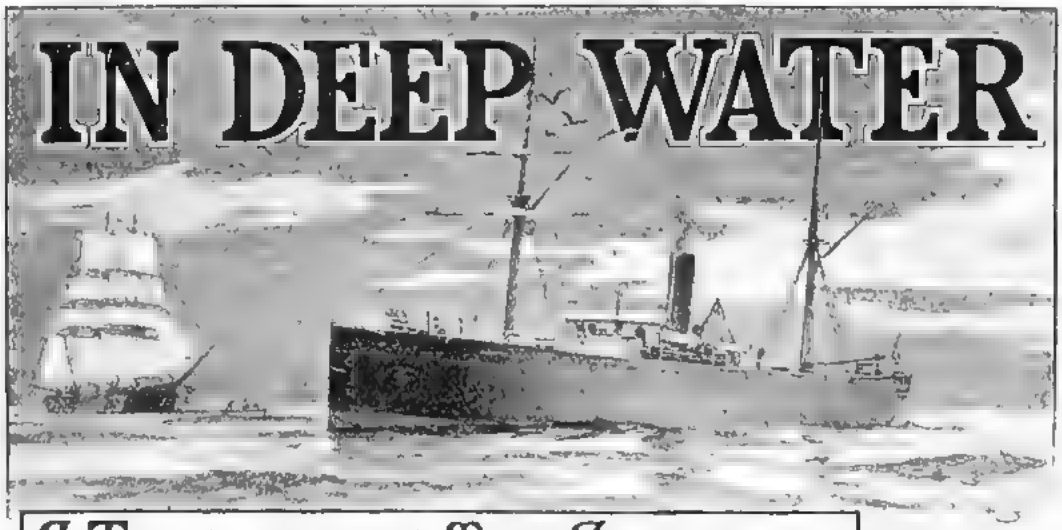
"What, didn't you meet any gamekeepers then?"

"Rather, we met two of them—jolly chaps!"

"*Jolly chaps!* Why, we gave them sixpence to stop you!"

"Ah! *We* gave them a shilling to let us through!"

(See "Our New Football Rules," page 433.)



IN DEEP WATER

A Tale of the Mid-Atlantic.

By Stacey Blake and W. E. Hodgson.

Illustrated by George Hawley.

This story concerns the fate of the ss. *Creole* (belonging to the well-known shipping firm of Grimm, Channing & Grimm) and of the *Creole's* second mate, Grant Heath. Hudson, captain of the *Creole*, undertakes to get rid of Grant Heath, against whom Martin Grimm, junior partner in the firm, bears a grudge, and afterwards scuttle the *Creole*, which is heavily insured, in return for a bribe of £3,000. While Martin Grimm and Hudson are discussing the scheme, their conversation is overheard by Edith Hopewell, niece of Mr. Channing, the senior partner, who is lying at the point of death in his house at Hampstead. Grant Heath goes aboard the *Creole* at Cardiff. Finding the ship in a great state of disorder, as the crew, having signed on, are spending their advance notes ashore, it is with difficulty that the two mates get any of the men to come and work. Captain Hudson, arriving just as the ship is ready, sees the new second mate and treats him roughly. Once the voyage has begun the crew find they are to be almost starved, and mutiny—but as they are calling at the Azores the captain gives them money, which they spend in drink, and the voyage proceeding, the crew neglect the ship, and Grant Heath, when taking in awning poles, is knocked overboard by Captain Hudson. From this time all on board drink heavily, and navigation is neglected—the crew lying about the decks in a fuddled condition—when a barque, the *Stella*, heaves in sight flying signals of distress. Getting no answer from the steamer, the captain and one of his men come aboard the *Creole*, and finding the whole crew in an unconscious state, the captain of the barque transfers the crews, he and his men taking the names of the *Creole* people (which he finds on the ship's papers), and leaving the *Creole's* crew to shift as best they can on the leaky sailing-vessel, when they recover their senses. When Captain Hudson finds himself on a strange ship he attempts to shoot Talbot, his first mate, but is himself severely wounded in the struggle that ensues. Grant Heath, rescued from a watery death by fishermen, is conveyed to Fayal, where he meets Edith Hopewell. They leave Fayal on the *Adrian*, and in the course of their voyage encounter the *Stella*, with the *Creole's* crew aboard her. Grant, disguised by his newly grown beard, volunteers to go as mate on the *Stella*, which wants an officer. Some days later, putting into the Cays for repairs, the *Stella* finds the *Creole* anchored in a little bay.

CHAPTER XVI.

HARD LYING.

"NOW, Mr. Talbot, *who's* scuttled the *Creole*? There's that swab's lies thrown in his teeth."

Captain Hudson, with his limbs trembling like osiers, clung to the rail while he wagged his head with malignant triumph into the darkness which had curtained from sight the anchored steamer.

There was a cry: "All ready forward!"

Grant was looking after the dropping of the anchor.

"Stand clear of the cable!" he shouted.

The driving hammer set free the wedge, and then the cable rushed with a clanging outcry through the hawse-pipe.

"And you may bet the rest is lies, Mr. Talbot, from beginning to end."

Sam Hudson felt new courage coursing through his veins. The sight of his own ship lying there seemed a full vindication of all the terrifying charges brought against him. Instead of being the villain, he had been the victim. He began to feel the pride of established rectitude. The glow of victorious virtue was in his blood, for here was triumphant justification indeed.

The mate shrugged his shoulders in a non-committal manner.

"There's the *Creole*, anyhow," he said. "Of the rest I don't know."

"No, but *I* know. I've been duped all round. I lose my ship because of your neglect. I nearly lose my ticket through that dog's lying tongue. Now, Mr. Talbot, I'm going to get some of my own back."

"Meaning the *Creole*, sir?"

"To begin with, yes." His eyes travelled along the deck and settled on Grant, who was now superintending the stowing of the foresail. "And then ——" He muttered significantly, but he did not articulate what was in his mind. He nodded to himself, and kept his thoughts behind his tongue.

"The *Creole* has been pinched, that's a cert," he continued. "Whether the pirates that have got 'er came off this bloomin' sea coffin, I dunno, but there's one thing, if that is so, they'll 'ave twigged who we are, and you bet they'll reckon that when we see our own ship lying there, we shall be up to a bit of no good. Consequently, that skipper'll 'eave round as soon as he's got his repairs, or whatever he's laid up for, done. So quick's the word, and the sooner you find out how the land lies, the better."

"Heath had best go to beg assistance. He won't be known."

"Why not?"

"Because whoever shipped us aboard this craft didn't find Heath among us, considering you hove him overboard some time back."

Hudson's mouth tightened.

"You believe that swab before me, then? He has nothing but his own word."

"That's all, sir, except a letter which he has for you from Mr. Grimm."

"A letter for me?"

"Yes, sir. Mr. Heath!"

Grant came aft in response to the call.

"You have a letter addressed to Captain Hudson?"

Grant took the written sheet from its dirty envelope, and put it in Hudson's trembling hands. The latter read it through most carefully: "Special instructions cancelled!" he repeated with a snarl. "Do you know what that means?"

"That Mr. Grimm considers it inexpedient to carry out the scuttling of the *Creole*, and—the other—just now," said Grant, quietly.

With a ghastly laugh and an oath, Hudson crushed the paper in his hands and flung it over the side.

"It's about some cargo," he said, staggering towards the companion. "If that's all the evidence you've got to support your lies, you'll find yourself on your back, my lad."

He went glowering away down to his berth, cursing his weakness with every step.

The mate looked over the side, but the piece of paper had floated away.

"You see, Mr. Heath," he said, his thoughts almost unconsciously breaking into words, "to an extent I am in this business as well. If the skipper loses his ticket on the charge of neglect, I shall do the same. I lost the *Creole* as much as he did."

"But you didn't conspire to scuttle her?"

"No, nor the other."

"Nor the other."

There was a moment's silence, during which they gazed into the velvet darkness.

"At least there's one thing certain," continued Grant, "we're all equally interested in getting hold of her again."

"And settling accounts with the enterprising pirate who appropriated her and dumped us on to this old windmill."

It occurred to Grant that, under the circumstances, the temporary separating of the steamer and her lawful crew had not been altogether disadvantageous to the former, but he said nothing, and moved forward to order the lowering of the port boat.

The falls ran through the squeaking pulley-blocks, and the boat sank evenly into the black water.

"Steady," said Talbot, over the rail. "Get to know as much as you can. Tell nothing, and use your eyes and ears."

So the boat pushed off towards where a gleaming light spotted the darkness and writhed in the black water. The oars stirred up the phosphorescence with slow measured strokes, as if underneath the black surface were all liquid fire.

Grant leaned forward at the tiller, watching the looming form of the vessel gather shape as they approached.

"Steamer ahoy!" he cried.

There came an answering shout:—

"Haloo! What boat is that?"

"We are the *Foam*, of Hull," answered Grant, quoting Mr. Talbot's story for want of a better. "We are leaky, so are laying-up for repairs."

A tall, lank, spare figure hung over the rail.

"The *Foam*, of Hull," he muttered. "What's this, anyhow? I reckon we're repairing ourselves," he said aloud. "Engine a bit rusty. Jest set quiet a minute—I'll sling a rope."

When Captain Jasper Howell looked into the face of the young man who presently climbed aboard, the disquietude that had lain heavily upon him since fate had brought within hail the

very last ship on the ocean that he wished to see became mingled with mystification. He prided himself that his memory was like a dry-plate. This was not one of the men whom he had transferred to the *Stella*. Perhaps he was mistaken. The barque was not his old ship after all. The half light had deceived him.

"What did you say wuz the name of your ship, stranger?" he asked, a little uneasily.

"The *Foam*, of Hull, barque," answered Grant, readily, gazing round the *Creole's* familiar decks. "Who are you?"

"My name is Hudson, sir," answered the American, "and this ship is the *Creole*, of Cardiff, England, bound for New Orleans."

"Glad to meet you, sir, I'm sure," replied Grant. "My skipper would have come to pay his compliments himself, only he's down with a touch of fever."

"Ah, sure! What's his name, anyhow?"

"Hudson, Captain Hudson," said Grant, unthinking of the deep game he had to play.

"Crumbs! Now that's mighty kewrious. What mought his full name be?"

"He signs his name Samuel Hudson."

"Say, that's a thundering, durned coincidence, ain't it, Mr. Skinner? I call's him Skinner, cos it's the name I best remember, but his ker-rect one is Talbot," the skipper hastened to add, as the mate grew very red in the face.

"Why, yep, it's a reg'lar theayter co-hincidence," agreed Mr. Skinner, "considering your name is Samuel Hudson, sir."

"Let's pipe below, sir," said the captain. "My steward is an artist at a cock-tail."

Grant sank down on the worn plush of the saloon seat.

"I guess you're mate aboard that craft?" remarked Howell.

"No. I'm the second," returned Grant.

"Ha!"

There was a world of significance in the soft exclamation. The second mate! He knew there was no second mate among that drunken crew that he had found aboard the *Creole*. The treacherous light of the evening *had* deceived him. This barque was not the *Stella*.

"I'm sorry to say," he said, feeling on sure ground now, "that we are without a second. Poor fellow, he was washed overboard a few watches out of Fayal, where we put in to bunker."

Grant peered unmoved into the depths of his cock-tail.

"That was bad," he said. "I once fell overboard myself in a gale about that place. It's very nasty, sir, to feel the cold sea choking you."

After all, Grant was an unskilful deceiver.

"I should smile," said the mate, feelingly.

"Are you laid up long here, sir?" asked Grant, between appreciative sips of his refreshment.

"I reckon till we've tinkered up the old steam-kettle. It may be a few hours, or a few days, according to how the mechanics hustle. Say, Piper, hand over the cigars."

A small, red-faced man of bulgy build, the very anti-type in figure of the man whose name he bore, came out.

"Ha!" sighed Howell, mournfully. "I was sorry to lose my second officer. He was a man, and a Columbus at navigation, sir. You saw him drown, Mr. Talbot?"

"Yes," answered the mate, gravely, turning his glass upside down to show that it was, beyond all doubt, empty, "and a dreadful sight it was. I shall never git over it. I saw him try to swim, and he actually did follow the ship for a quarter of a mile, while I was chucking life-buoys and hen-coops in his way, but I daren't hove-to in that weather. And then he gave a screech when he saw how 'twas, which, believe me, I cud hear above the storm, and then he waved his hand and went down."

The skipper gazed approvingly at the mate after this brilliant effort, and signalled his appreciation by noticing the empty glass and ordering it to be refilled. After all, the log-book did not give much information, and a few more details were necessary.

"What was the young fellow's name?" asked Grant, interested in these graphic particulars.

"Name was Heath, a Massachusetts man," replied the skipper, watching the smoke rise from his lips while he tried to imagine incidents in the late second's career with which to regale the stranger. "My, he was a hustler! I've seen young Heath, sir, go down in the fo'c'stle and thrash a sulky crew with a rope-end till they stampeded up the fore-scuttle into the shrouds jest skeered to death."

"Scat me! yes," said the mate, wiping his mouth. "There was that affair at Cadiz, when we had ter skip outer the harbour putty lively because he'd ben wiping the decks down with a carabineer, who'd ben too durned insolent, and I calc'late," he added, as he observed the skipper thinking hard to try and cap his own reminiscences, "that the poor chap 'ud die hard, for he cud swim like a fish. Coz when we wuz once in Valparaiso Bay, and a lot of sharks wuz choppin' about 'round' us, durn me if he didn't drop over on 'em and knife a couple afore you cud wink."

The fire of emulation died out of the skipper's eye, for he knew the romancing abilities of Mr. Skinner, and he foresaw that the stranger's faith

in the deceased second mate might be severely taxed, so he left unspoken the astounding incident that he was about to place to the credit of that wonderful young man, and contented himself with confirming Mr. Skinner's story.

"You say his name was Heath?" questioned Grant.

"That wuz it. Grant Heath. I dunno how we shall break the news to his poor old mother."

"Um! That's where the resemblance ends, though it's an extraordinary coincidence," Grant remarked, throwing to the winds his diplomacy.

"What is?" asked Howell, over the top of his glass.

"Why, that your name should be the same as my skipper, that our first mate should be called Talbot, and that my name should be Grant Heath, the same as your second's. I, too, fell overboard a few hours out of Fayal, like your man, but, as I say, the other incidents you mention don't tally, and I haven't a mother."

There was silence for a moment, during which time the skipper felt about on the floor for his cigar, which had suddenly slipped from his fingers.

"Yes," murmured the mate blankly, "it's a reg'lar theayter and dime novel co-hincidence knocked inter one."

"It is remarkable," said Grant dryly.

Howell looked up, with his yellow teeth slightly bared and cunning lurking in his enraged eyes.

"Yes, it is re-markable," he said, sharply. "I guess you'll say that craft of yours over there, next, is called the *Creole!*"

"I take it," replied Grant, with a chance shot that brought him nearer to the truth than he thought, "that you know as much about her as myself."

Jasper Howell glared at him.

"I dunno what you're gittin' at, stranger," he said, fiercely.

"Why, nothing," replied Grant, mildly, "only I was wondering how ever you managed to work a steamship with such a raw crew. The engines——"

"Are superintended by duly qualified engineers," snapped the other.

"Ha, yes, of course, only duly qualified engineers aren't, as a rule, found among the crew of a—er—sailing ship?"

Captain Howell glowered savagely. An offensive retort was on his lips, but Grant continued: "Possibly your crew, though, are all wonderful fellows like that second mate who got drowned. I think I will be getting back now."

Captain Howell nearly choked with rage, while the mate, smitten with silence, stonily glared at his chief.

Grant rose, smiling pleasantly, with hands in his jacket pockets. He stepped towards the companion.

"Stop!" from Howell.

Grant turned on his heel and saw that the other held a revolver in his hand.

"I may say, sir," said Grant, coolly, "that I hold you covered as well. If you notice the outline of my right-hand jacket pocket, you will see that there is a revolver there, and it is pointing at you. I have been in Texas; I am used to shooting from the hip."

Howell snapped his teeth.

"If I wanted to drop you, stranger," he said, "it's a ship's load of dollars to a kid's money-box that I cud do so, so don't try any tricks. Now, jest git, while you've got a hull skin, and don't come around hyer asking questions any more if you want ter keep good."

Grant backed slowly out of the saloon with a scornful smile on his lips; then, as he turned the corner, he sprang up the companion and made his way to the deck. A few long strides took him to the engine-room door, whence he could hear the whirr of a drill at work and the quick tap of a hammer.

"Below, there!" he cried.

The song of the drill stopped.

"Dinna ye ken, mon," came a harsh voice, "that I canna build new engines oot o' scrap iron in a minute or twa. Ye'll hae ter——"

"McPherson ahoy!" burst out Heath.

"Losh! eh? Whae's that?"

Grant felt a hand clapped over his mouth, and a powerful arm crooked round his throat. He was pulled back, and the next instant he was grasped by another pair of arms round the legs. He struggled, but the pressure was put on his throat. His feet were kicked from under him, and he was picked up and lodged a moment, none too gently, on the rail. He clutched at a stanchion, but successive blows from a bent knee and the hard part of a boot heel loosened his grasp, and the next thing he knew was that he was dropping into the water with a considerable amount of celerity.

He went in back first, but he rose buoyant as a cork.

He looked up the rust-streaked sides of the vessel and saw the grinning, evil faces of the skipper and mate looking at him. Instantly, another figure joined them, a red-haired man with bared arms.

"Whae hae ye been sockdologing o'er-board, mon?" cried the new-comer, wiping an arm across his oily face.

"McPherson!" sang out Grant, hearing the voice.

"Hey-up, mon," responded the engineer, "whae are ye?"

"I am Heath," came the reply, "and the rest of the crowd are aboard that barque. The *Creole's* been pirated."

"Heath! Mon, but ye were drooned."

"No, I was saved."

A flash of light spat in the darkness, and a bullet pecked the water just beyond the swimmer's head. The phosphorescence he stirred up betrayed his position. He dived and came up alongside his boat.

Howell turned savagely to McPherson.

"How long shall we be before steam's up?" he cried, as he menaced the engineer with his revolver.

"Dinna be sae free wi' yer pooder-play, skeeper," said the Scotsman, untying a red handkerchief that gathered his trousers and a greasy shirt together at the waist, and wiping his face with it slowly. "Wi' guid luck," he continued, twisting up the 'kerchief when he had sufficiently wiped his countenance, "and another spell o' twelve hours' wairk, I dinna think we shall be far oot. I mind noo, skeeper, when I was a wee bit bairn——"

"By thunder, sir," bellowed Howell, "if you don't git below and work durned double miracles on them engines, I'll brown you on your own boiler-plates!"

"Losh me!" murmured the engineer, going slowly below, "I believe ma reason's comin' back wi' a bonny rush. Ma certie!"

"Hoo lang will ye be fitting that new brass, mon?" he asked of Watson.

"'Arf a hour, sir," answered the second from the crank-pit.

"Hush!" whispered McPherson, excitedly, "dinna work sae hard. This job's got tae hang oot a bittie. Bide a wee. We're ganging ter hae ten sorts o' excitement soon."

"What's hup? What's the gime?"

"We hae been cruelly deceived, mon! We're no' daft. This isna the proper crew aboard the vessel at all. The crood's over in anither craft just by. This boat has been pirated, and the rest of the crew dropped somewhere or ither, but they kept us ter wairk the engines. *Losh!*"

GRANT FELT A HAND CLAPPED OVER HIS MOUTH, AND A POWERFUL ARM CROOKED ROUND HIS THROAT.

CHAPTER XVII.

HARD FIGHTING.

"WE'D better get the hands aft and talk to them."

Grant sat in his wet clothes in the saloon. Talbot bent over the table with his head in his hands. Hudson sat with a great-

coat over his pyjamas, glaring wildly from a corner locker. He nodded at the mate's words.

"Bring 'em down 'ere," he said. "I'll talk to 'em. We've got to get that ship back again if we have to shoot every blessed Yankee aboard her. D'yer think the engineers'll give any help?" he added, turning to Grant.

"I don't know, sir," answered Heath, "at least, they know how the land lies."

"And so does that Yankee skipper," interjected Talbot, "and you may depend he'll just lock them up out of harm's way at the first signs of attack."

While the mate went forward, Grant slipped into dry clothes. Presently the crew came aft, and with eagerness crowded into the little cabin to learn the result of the second mate's visit to the steamer, for they had heard and seen the pistol shot, which evidenced no ordinary circumstances.

Captain Hudson's communications were brief and to the point.

"Boys," he said, "there's the *Creole* over there, and we want her. What's ter be done when the rascal who's collared her won't hand her over? Why, when we can't get our own for asking, we goes and takes it, and the *Creole's* our own."

He rose to his feet to speak, and clutched the table to steady himself. There was something pathetic in his weakness. For all he was a villain, he looked heroic standing there with the defiance shining out of his eyes.

The men replied with a low murmur of approbation.

"Has it been found out 'ow we got aboard this craft, sir?" asked the bo'sun, respectfully.

Hudson sank on to the bench.

"We have figured it out," he said, "that the crew who are in possession of the *Creole* came off this rotten ship, which they sailed till they couldn't sail any longer. Coming across our sound craft, they pirated her and put us aboard this floating coffin. And 'ow did they do it? You know 'ow. You've all been hogs. I reckon when they come aboard there wasn't one among you as could lift an arm. Consequently, they shipped us aboard this tub without any trouble. Now, it's easy to see we shan't get the *Creole* back for the asking. We've got to go and seize her, and remember, it's as much your interest as mine. Will you do your best?"

"Aye, aye, sir," cried the men.

"And, if we don't get her back," he said, "remember every man of us 'as got to face the Board of Trade."

"If we ever get this leaky hulk to port," added the mate, grimly.

"Which ain't a certainty by no manner of means," remarked the bo'sun.

"Has anybody got weapons of any sort?" asked the mate.

"There ain't a pistol among us, sir," said Brady; "but a marlinspike lashed on to a stick is a handy thing. My! in the China seas I once saw a Malay mauled with such a weapon. No, there ain't a prettier thing for hitting than a marlinspike on a stick. An' next ter that, some of the galley knives might be handy."

"Well, go forward," said the mate, "and lay hands on the best weapons you can pick up."

"Yes, that's it," added Hudson, with husky fierceness; "something that you can hit with, and remember that it's as good as fighting for yer life, for it's a cert that this ship won't last through the first bit of a blow."

One of the three seamen who had come aboard with Grant Heath from the *Adrian* came forward.

"It seems ter me, sir," he said, "that we came aboard here not knowing how things lay. We came to help to work the ship, not to get mixed up in things that we dunno anything about. We thought this was a straight business."

"You're afraid, are you, my lad?" sneered Hudson. "Good; you shall stay on the ship if you're so fond of her. Mr. Talbot, you might find some holy-stoning for this man to do."

The fellow turned red in the face and stepped back among the others. And presently the three of them, as the fighting lust caught them, went about preparing themselves with weapons with as much animation as the others. Mr Talbot had gone on deck to superintend the greasing of the falls and the davit blocks, and Grant, coming out of his berth, saw the skipper sitting there alone.

"Mr. Heath."

Grant stepped forward.

"I reckon we're at one in wanting to get back the *Creole*," said Hudson. "You'll do what you can, eh? I'm pretty sick and helpless."

"I shall do my duty, sir," said Grant.

"And after?" whispered Hudson.

"I don't understand, sir!"

Hudson half closed his eyes and played a thoughtful tattoo on the table with his fingers.

"I mean," he said slowly, "me and this crew ain't quite done as they ought, 'r else we shouldn't be on this broken-down craft. Now, when we get back the *Creole*, we shall be as we were, except for what you know. The point is, what are you goin' ter talk about when you get ter shore?"

"I don't know, sir," said Grant, frankly enough. "I have not thought about it."

"Perhaps wot happens between now and then may 'elp you to a decision?"

"Yes, sir," answered Grant in a moment, "I think so."

"Then you will shake 'ands with me, and smudge off the slate some of this that's gone? I might be able to make my tale good," he added, "but there's the rest of 'em, Mr. Talbot and the crew; and you might say, the engineers as well, who are on the *Creole*. You'd do more good by keeping your tongue behind yer teeth, now."

Grant took the skipper's proffered hand.

"But it has gone beyond my control," he said. "I may not be able to alter anything even by silence."

"There don't much else matter but you," rejoined Hudson. But Samuel Hudson could not see far. His cunning, after all, was shallow, which kept him from being as great a villain as he might have been. He was reckless, cruel, violent. He was a bad man, but he was no artist in wrong-doing, like the dark-skinned, black-eyed man who sat at a desk in the City of London. He was aware of the girl, who knew almost as much as Heath; but he took no account of the circumstance. He knew nothing of, nor in, his most strategic moments could he have deduced what would follow, her landing at Spanish Town. He did not know of the long message that passed over the cable to an old man who, having recovered from a recent illness, sat before a fire in his room at Hampstead, nor did he know of the long journey this old man set out upon because of that message.

As Grant came to the deck, a pallid face looked into his. It was Pipp's.

"Is there goin' to be bloodshed, sir?" he asked, fearfully, "'cos I ain't never done violence to no man, sir, and I 'es a puffect 'orror of breeches, an' ambuscades, an' Spanish blides, sir. I cawn't even abear to read on 'em, sir."

"Anyhow," said Grant, smiling at the fellow's quaint and grotesque misquotation, "you don't want to be left on the ship, do you? We are going to make attempt to get back the *Creole*. If you prefer to stop on here and pump for your life instead of getting a sound ship under your feet—well, do so by all means."

"No, sir, but preserve me from plague and murder and suddint death, sir. I'm afraid I'd fynt in the dye of battle, sir! I cawn't help it, sir. Me muscles is turned inter runnin' water, and me bones are as brimstone."

Grant felt a sudden contempt for this weak, foolish creature, yet because of his own strength he forbore the harshness that might have come from one less strong, for he was a man who was as gentle as he was courageous.

"You shall stop in the boats, Pipp," he said, kindly. "You won't get hurt there."

He avoided the steward's servile thanks, and went forward to join the mate.

"We'd better let the men parade under arms, Mr. Heath," the mate said, "and just see how they've fixed themselves up. You have got a revolver for yourself?"

"Yes. What about you?"

"The skipper has given me his. Hullo, Spaander, what have you got there?"

The Dutchman had got a belt round his waist in which were stuck a pleasing variety of galley-knives, while in one hand he carried a chopper, lengthened by a piece of mop-stick fastened to the handle.

"I vos armed, sir," he said.

Pipp, who was skulking at Grant's heels, looked with horror at this ludicrously savage figure.

"Too much armed, doctor," said the mate. "This chopper will do, but get rid of the knives."

Of the forecastle hands all, save two of the stokers, who had armed themselves with various hammers that they had found, had prepared weapons according to the bo'sun's suggestion, and very formidable instruments of offence they were.

The port boat was manned first, with Grant and eight men in her. Captain Hudson and the rest of the crew, save Talbot and the bo'sun, who stayed to manœuvre the falls, were lowered in the other boat. The former then dropped down beside the skipper, who lay weakly in the bottom of the boat, with his head on the thwarts, while the bo'sun swung himself into Grant's boat.

Then, very silently, with muffled oars, they began to creep towards the steamer. A little breeze had risen and disturbed the oily surface, so that the glow of the phosphorescence was extinguished, and there was naught but the soft murmur of their oars to betray them; and the song of the surf on the beach hid that.

Grant's boat went first, the other, commanded by the mate and bearing the sick skipper, followed a few lengths behind.

There were no lights visible on the steamer now, and so black was the night that there seemed to be no space beyond. The darkness was as a heavy, solid, black, tangible substance that closed them in, so that they could feel it. The long, low, sleek, watery hills slid by them. Now they rose gently up, now fell into the shallow liquid valley.

All at once a softened light filtered through the sky to southward, then, while they watched, a piece of black cloud lifted slowly like the lid of a box, and a round moon peeped out, so that they saw what had been concealed before, the slow-pulsing ocean, the island with the surf whitening the beach, and the *Creole* lying a quarter of a mile ahead.

"Now we are shown up," muttered Grant. "If we had only been five minutes earlier!"

"Ha!"

A fleck of fire spotted the solid silhouette of the hull, and a fraction of time later a bullet sped by their ears with a drone as the noise of the report reached them.

There came a little gasp of fear from Pipp, who sat in the bottom of the boat, and a growl of fierce defiance from the bo'sun.

"Back, you varmints!" cried a heavy voice from the steamer. "There's fifteen six-shooters pointed at yer dead on, and, by Josh! we'll riddle yer hides if you come a fathom further!"

"He's only bluffing," whispered Grant. "Here's his answer."

He fired his revolver at the black mass of ship, aiming somewhere in the direction whence the Yankee's fire had spotted the darkness, and almost simultaneously the mate's pistol spoke.

There was no reply from the steamer, neither voice nor shot. The boats almost hesitated. There was something menacing in the silence. The ship was massed darkly against the lighter sky. Her masts, rigging, bridge, and funnel were sharply outlined, but the deck-houses and hull of the ship were merged into one black undetailed shadow, which might conceal the most menacing dangers for all they knew. A volley of death might pour from that dark hull any moment. There was something terrifying in the delay, as if the blow were only held back a moment to make it surer when it fell.

"Steady, but altogether," whispered Grant.

They bent their backs to the oars, and the boat shot ahead.

"Be gosh!" cried the same voice from the steamer, "you're all dead men if you don't keep right thar where you are."

Then, the ship veering round a point so that the moonlight fell aslant on the quarter they were approaching, they saw dark figures moving about the decks, and one man leaning over the lee-rail cursing and threatening them if they did not sheer off.

But those men in the boats became only the more inflamed by the threats, and with loud shouts of defiance they slung out boat-hooks and leapt up the steamer's rusty side.

The after boat had drawn level with the other, so that they attacked almost simultaneously. There was no method in the assault; no preconceived plan; only one motive determining their tactics. They wanted to get aboard, and when they got there they trusted their hands to hit hard. A man in the mate's boat, springing from the gunwale, clung to the deck above and pulled himself up with a hand on the lower rail. The Yankee skipper leaned over, with a revolver in his hand, and pulled the trigger point blank at him. There was a flash of yellow fire and a cry. The man's fingers loosened, and he fell into the boat.

The next instant a flying marlinspike, flung with unerring accuracy, hit Howell on the head, and he staggered back, clawing the air, and fell against the mess-room ventilator.

Of the other boat's crew, the bo'sun was the first to come to hand-grips with the enemy. He put one hand round a lower rail, and then, getting a foot into a port-hole, he clambered up, with his right hand grasping his mounted marlinspike.

He felled the first man, who came for him with a fire-shovel, and then he was instantly surrounded by half a dozen men, variously armed, who cut and struck at him with vicious persistency.

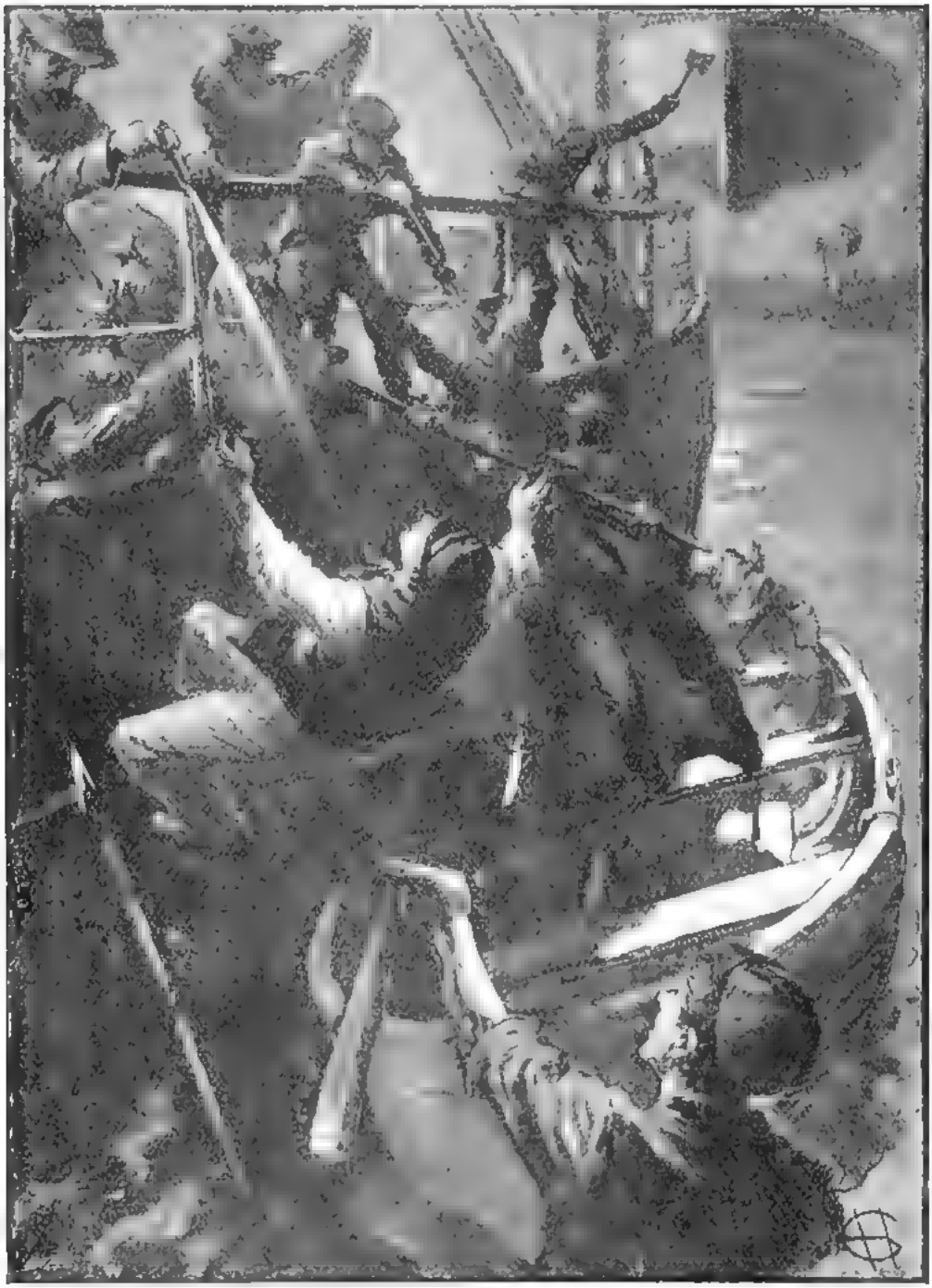
Someone fired a shot at him and missed. A marlinspike came down upon the shooter's head with a dull sound, and the weapon dropped from his hand. It was picked up by one of the invaders, whose shooting might have enabled him to successfully hit a haystack at a dozen yards.

The bo'sun was a strong man, but he was being forced back by numbers. His bared arms were bleeding. There was a red gash on one cheek, and the blood poured darkly from his exposed neck. He had now got his back against the galley door, and though, while principally on the defence, he got blows in now and then that made his assailants yell and curse, and press him the harder, he was driven from his position so that his back became exposed, and a blow from behind made him tumble inert and helpless on the deck. But the arm that had struck him down fell limp and nerveless like a strand of rope, as a bullet from Grant's revolver pierced it, and the weapon clattered on to the iron deck, while the man cursed in impotent rage.

Except for the short fight that had raged round the bo'sun, most of the Yankee crew's attention had been directed towards repelling the boarders before they set foot on the deck, and in this, from their position, they had most of the advantage. Some of the fiercest fighting took place on the rail. Talbot, in climbing up, was flung back into the bottom of the boat, almost breaking his back across the thwarts. But he did not loose grip of his revolver, and as he lay there he shot the man who had thrown him, and who was jeering at him over the taffrail.

For the time being the defenders of the vessel had it pretty much their own way.

They stood with their feet in the scuppers and grimly whipped down every head and hand that came above. But after the bo'sun had climbed aboard, closely followed by Grant, their



THERE WAS A FLASH OF YELLOW FIRE AND A CRY.

attention was taken a moment from the outer defences, and this presented an opportunity for others to clamber up. There were no firearms among the men. Howell and his mate had possessed revolvers. The former had been incapacitated early in the fight, and his weapon appropriated by the man who tried to shoot Brady. In turn, with three shots left, it fell into the hands of the cook, who blazed the three cartridges away ineffectually. But Skinner held to his pistol tenaciously, firing a shot now and then with care, and always missing.

The attackers pressed forward, hungry for combat. The iron plates under their feet, the familiar surroundings of their old ship, the very smell from the engine-room gratings, gave them greater courage, till every man fought like two.

But the Englishmen, divided—for more than half were still in the boats—fought against heavy odds, and even with the most desperate courage one man is not equal to two. If they had had firearms there would have been ghastly work done. As it was, there were more dreadful things committed than a pen can tell of.

The British crew, with the fighting madness on them, hammered and smashed. They rushed at their opponents in red fury. From among the shadows came the sickening sounds of crashing blows meeting flesh and bone, the gasping of frenzied breaths and hoarse cries of pain mingled with shrieks that told of worse horrors.

"Keep them off, boys," cried Howell, who had staggered to his feet. "Don't let any more git aboard till we've polished this lot off."

He picked up a crowbar and lurched into the fighting, stumbling over Brady, who lay wounded. The bo'sun seized him round the legs and tripped him up. He fell into the scuppers with Hans Spaander thumping the life out of him, for that worthy cook, who had just succeeded in climbing aboard, had only done so at the cost of losing his meat-chopper.

Howell drew up a booted foot and let out below the belt at the Dutchman, who promptly fell, with a gasp, over the bo'sun.

Grant was the only leader of the attacking party aboard, for the mate had not yet succeeded in forcing his way up, and he shouted encouragement with all the breath he had left. A blow on the head dazed him. He felt something trickling from his head into his eyes so that he could not see. Then he fell heavily to the deck.

A great bulging-muscled Dane, one of those who were acting as stokers aboard the *Creole*, picked him up, and, with a loud barbaric yell, flung him full at two men who were clutching the rails from below. There came a splash as the three heavy bodies struck the water.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW THE FIGHT ENDED.

THE fresh coolness of the sea brought Grant to his senses with suddenness. His head rose to the surface, and he saw the other two men swimming beside him.

"Come," he said, "follow me. We'll take them in the rear. Here, three or four of you fellows who can swim," he cried softly to those in the boat, "slip into the water quietly, and hang on behind. Be careful. Don't make a sound."

Very quietly, three men dropped sternwards out of the boat, and then swam silently along the broadside of the vessel, round under the rudder and motionless propeller, to the other side.

For the most part they swam on their backs, the easier to carry their weapons.

They looked up the high, smooth sides of the ship. There was no means of ascending that iron wall. They could hear the tumult of the fight on the other side of the vessel, the shouts, the noise of blows. The sound was maddening. It set their blood tingling. They clawed at the smooth, slimy iron of the ship's side, as now it slanted from them, now swayed like a pent roof over their heads as the wanton swell lifted the great hull, but all resultless.

"It's no go, sir," said one man, spitting the salt water out of his mouth; "we can't get up."

There came a little metallic tap on the iron plates away forward.

"There's a bit of ash-shoot chain hanging over the side somewhere, I think," said Heath.

He swam towards the place whence the sound appeared to come.

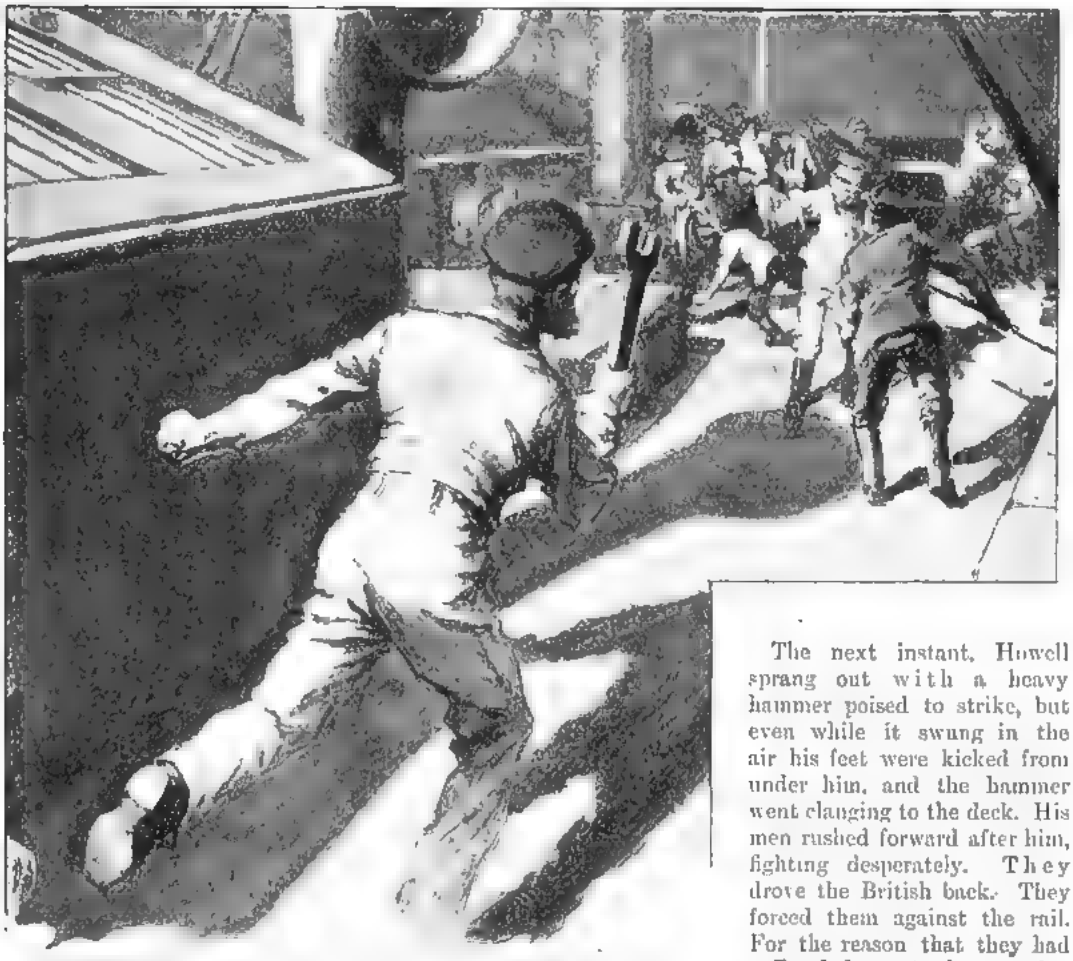
Tap! it came again as the vessel gently rolled. He saw a length of rope, to the end of which had been lashed a long canvas bag, dangling over the side. It was at least 3ft. above him, but as the vessel heeled towards him he sprang up from the water and clutched it with one hand.

He pulled himself up hand over hand. His fingers curled round the rail, and he stepped on to the deck a moment later.

Another man, holding his weapon in his teeth, came up in similar fashion. In a minute or two the others were standing beside him with the water trickling into pools round their feet.

Then they crept between the after-winch and No. 4 hatch, and, without a word of warning, took the Yankees in the rear.

The latter, turning to face this new attack, left their front open, so that the *Creole's* first crew poured over the side, a torrent of battle-mad men. Howell was up again, rallying his men in a voice that was hoarse and broken with



MCPHERSON RUSHED INTO THE FIGHT IN A KIND OF BARBAROUS FRENZY.

excitement. Skinner lay wounded among the steering-gear.

The Americans backed on to the quarter-deck, desperately disputing every inch. The fight, from being scattered about, became concentrated. There was scarce a combatant among either crew who had not received some wound or blood-mark. A number lay groaning about the deck, and there were some still forms lying in the shadows.

"Is it going to be a surrender?" cried Grant, as the others backed on to the after-steering gear. They stood there grim and desperate, awaiting the onslaught of the Englishmen. There was a momentary pause for breathing. Grant repeated his question. "There is your own ship over there," he added, "and your boats are alongside."

For answer there came a mocking laugh, and an empty revolver was flung heavily into his face. He tottered a moment, and then fell like a log to the deck.

The next instant, Howell sprang out with a heavy hammer poised to strike, but even while it swung in the air his feet were kicked from under him, and the hammer went clanging to the deck. His men rushed forward after him, fighting desperately. They drove the British back. They forced them against the rail. For the reason that they had suffered less at the opening of hostilities than their assailants, they were in greater numbers. They would probably have driven them overboard to a man, but that something happened to turn the tide. There came a hammering at the engine-room skylight. There was a sound of crashing glass and of heavy blows against splintering wood that seemed to come from within. One mighty stroke shivered the framework, and sent the fragments dancing into the air. A moment later, as if impelled by some force from below, a wild-looking head, with red hair, appeared through the scattered skylight.

"My, ye gomerills! Ye'd fasten me doon oot o' it, wad ye? Losh! but it's a bonny fecht! Push behind, Watson. Gang at it, laddies! Gie the piratin' scoondrels burgoo!"

With the help of his assistants below, McPherson clambered through, grasping a long, heavy spanner in his hand. He rushed into the fight in a kind of barbarous frenzy. He laid about him

with his weapon wildly, ferociously; then he lost it because he threw it at someone, and without staying to pick up any other weapon, for they lay plentifully bestrewing the deck, he rushed in berserk and fought with his naked hands, yelling the, while, in his mad, fighting abandon, savage Gaelic cries of defiance that were supposed to encourage his comrades and strike terror into the hearts of his enemies.

A man rushed at him with a galley poker; he avoided the blow and seized his assailant in his arms.

"Why, it's you, ye loon o' an Irish cook, is it?" he cried, as he seized the successor of Hans Spaander. "The Dutchmon wi' an Irish accent. Ye leein' gomerill! O'er ye gang tae the sharks."

He flung him far over the rail, where he fell into the boat below, on the top of Pipp, who at that moment was preparing to come aboard. A remarkable change had come over the steward. At the firing of the first shot a paralysis of terror had seized him. He lay there at the bottom of the boat, trembling in fervent fear. Then, somehow, he knew not how, the uproar, the sounds of battle, seemed to infect him with courage. He felt an uncontrollable desire to see what was going on. He began to forget his cowardice. The little courage that coursed through his veins, though suppressed long enough, came to life, and he felt a thrill through his body that he had not known before.

He saw the appearance of McPherson, the man who, in Pipp's eyes, was the very synonym of all that was great in fighting quality, and that was the last match required to inflame his blood to fighting heat. He rose in the boat to climb the ship's side, but was instantly felled by the Irish cook's limp body falling heavily on him. He cleared himself and sprang up with a fierceness and vigour that were new to him. He climbed up and scrambled to the deck, just as the two engineers emerged from the engine-room skylight after McPherson.

He seized a weapon. He saw confusedly the desperate fight going on, but his eyes focussed themselves on a motionless body that lay just abaft the companion.

"It's Mister 'Eath," he gasped. "'Evings! this is battle and murder."

He plunged into the *mêlée* like one possessed. He did not know what was happening. He did not know that the lonely occupant of the other boat, who was idle from the conflict because the weakness of fever was on him, had thrown aside his sickness, as he, Pipp, had cast away his cowardice; so strange an influence comes from the breath of battle.

Hudson, with wonderful effort, had leaped up, and, aided by a rope made fast to the rail, had pulled himself level with the deck. He came face to face with Howell, who swiftly recognised him as he was about to climb over the rail.

The Yankee skipper, half dazed, staggered towards him.

"We're a good pair," he gasped hoarsely. "You're sick and I'm wounded. We'll fight it out."

He seized Hudson, who clutched him round the neck. They struggled impotently a moment, locked in each other's arms, with the iron rail between them, then Hudson, losing his footing, but still clinging to his assailant's neck, pulled Howell over, and both men fell into the black depths. Hudson came up right against the side of the vessel, Howell a few yards away. The former clung to a life-buoy, flung over by the steward, and then a rope with a noose was cast to him, which he managed to get round himself, and he was hauled up.

But Howell climbed into one of the boats that was drifting slowly away, and cried out in a voice that mingled rage with weakness, hate with despair.

"Come on, boys, overboard. The game's played out. That's the *Stella* over thar."

There came nine or ten dives into the water, and in the moonlight the men of the *Creole* saw their antagonists climb into one of the boats they themselves had but lately vacated. There were some wounded men who did not follow, and there were some motionless forms in the shadows that took no cognisance of either defeat or victory.

"Men," cried Hudson, huskily, "you've done well, and some of you have suffered. Get below in the saloon and help yourself to anything you can find. My! there's some wounded and some dead. Never mind, me and Pipp'll look after 'em. Where's Mr. Talbot?"

"He's lying dead by the engine-room door, sir," answered one of the hands.

"Dead! it has been a dear victory."

He staggered along the deck. No courage could overcome the weakness of his body. There were two of his own men, one a seaman, the other a stoker, lying all twisted up in the ghastly distortion of death, and there were others of the opposing crew lying about grotesquely where they had fallen, some on their faces, others looking wide-eyed up at the stars. None were pleasant to look upon, for a marlinspike, or a clubbed hammer, does not do its work so cleanly as a bullet.

He found Talbot, not dead, but plainly insensible, and he saw Grant Heath stretched out by the companion-head.

"Get below, Pipp, and fetch one of the

engineers up," he said. "There are some wounded to be got below."

Hudson knelt down over Grant as the steward disappeared. He glanced swiftly and suspiciously around. There were only three wounded men who appeared conscious, and they lay out of sight round the cabin skylight, where they could see nothing of the length of deck. He put his ear to the second mate's lips. He could distinguish slight breathing.

"Not dead!" he murmured.

He laid hold of the unmoving body and dragged it with infinite effort to the scuppers. Then he pushed it, feet first, through the rails, bit by bit, till the outer portion grew heavier and overbalanced. Then it fell into the water with a ghastly splash.

(To be concluded.)

"Wot are you a-doin' hof, sir?"

Pipp, coming up the companion, had heard the splash.

"I'm gettin' rid of some o' these carcasses," said Hudson. "That was a Yankee. There's two more up there. You might give me a help with 'em when you've got the wounded below."

"Ain't you goin' to read no service hover 'em, sir?"

Hudson gave a sneering laugh.

"There's Mr. Talbot, sir," continued Pipp. "Thank 'Eving 'e ain't dead!"

They saw the mate sitting up, holding a hand to his head. There was a look of infinite horror on his face. He tried to speak. Then he fell back.

HOW TO PASS EXAMINATIONS SUCCESSFULLY.

First and foremost we will presume that you are intelligent, and possess the gift of application. These are two necessary qualities, and will overcome even a previous want of education. The foundation of success seems to be the finding out of how little you really know. You will, perhaps, be disheartened by this knowledge of yourself, but when once fairly launched upon your course of study you will begin to feel interested, and must give your mind to learning; resolving, also, that you will rather be a long time in mastering your subjects thoroughly than be very quick and subsequently fail in your examination. Before commencing to study, however, you must have fully decided in what examination you will compete, and must then acquaint yourself with full particulars respecting it. After finding out the nature and the number of subjects in which you will have to be proficient, consider which are your worst points and which are your best, afterwards giving the most time to those subjects with which you are least acquainted. Above all things, consider your health, and spend as much time as you can out of doors. If it be possible, arrange your studies methodically, fixing so long for each subject, and leaving intervals for recreation, pleasant chat, and outdoor exercise. If, on the other hand, you are already employed daily, you must arrange accordingly, only taking care that you do not commence study immediately after business, but spend an interval in the fresh air. All these remarks are applicable to self-teachers. Nevertheless, it is advisable to place yourself under a clever coach, when, if you can abide by his instructions, you are more likely to succeed. Under any circumstances, whilst undergoing the course of study, never lose sight of the idea that all your efforts are necessary. Anxiety as to your result will be a good stimulant to diligence, and you cannot pay too much attention to each of your subjects, never working, however, when you are too tired and your brain is weary. When you go up for your examination the case becomes different—a little confidence will then help you through. Do not work yourself into a miserable and nervous state of mind, but think calmly that you will do your best, let the result be what it may.

"Penn Wright."

By special arrangement, Mr. C. B. Fry has undertaken to contribute to no magazine intended for boys or athletes except THE CAPTAIN. *Readers are requested to bear in mind that we have secured, especially for their benefit, the services of the first writer on athletics in the world. Mr. Fry will reply to a limited number of correspondents* **by post** *every month, providing they are members of* THE CAPTAIN CLUB. *All applications for advice from the Athletic Editor, as well as from other* CAPTAIN *"experts," should be accompanied by* THE CAPTAIN CLUB **Coupon** *which will be found in one of the advertisement pages.*—THE EDITOR.

A CHAT WITH CORRESPONDENTS.

Bingo Mam, from Australia, is a reformer, and what she says is so much to the point that I cannot forbear quoting it. "I am," she says, "an art student, and have studied for three years at home. The life is the very jolliest you can imagine—plenty of hard work, with visible results; plenty of play and fun. But over here there is something wrong. My fellow-students are a good set on the whole, but most of them are anæmic, and have livers and round backs, headaches, etc., which ills arise from want of fresh air and exercise, and also from too much coffee, late hours, and insufficient food. They laugh at me when I tell them this, and won't believe that if they paid more attention to the ordinary rules of health their work would be ten times better and more virile. Their system seems to be 'brains *v.* body.' They work awfully well; but, instead of taking a run round the field or a turn in the gym. during rests, they stick in the hot, airless class-rooms, and stew over Maeterlinck, anatomy, etc. Most of them come by train and omnibus, and few know the value of a walk. They know the name and origin of every muscle in the human body, but the use of none, and, taken generally, they are far more dead than alive. My aim in life just now is to wake them up a bit; but it is pretty difficult, as no one seems to see there is anything wrong. I have only one ally—a boy who knows more about drawing than all the rest put together, and who is more than my match with the single-sticks. But even he is not good for long, as he has consumption or something, and has to go abroad. As long as he remains here we work together, and have already a few disciples who play about mildly with dumb-bells and try on the fencing masks. We want to teach them fencing in earnest, also to get up a hockey club and hare and hounds, and cricket in the summer, for there is a big field behind the school. But I can't understand English girls. They are enthusiastic enough to begin with, especially if there is any chance of club colours and a becoming costume; but directly they get the least bit knocked about or shouted at they give up. And then they can't run straight, but wobble along and tumble down and hurt themselves in ways which, to an ordinary person, would be impossible. The other day, for instance, I was in the gym., showing one of them how to tackle clubs, and somehow or other she managed to nearly brain herself, and had to be taken home in a cab. They are also, most of them, in deadly fear of a knock, and the worst of it is, the things that call themselves boys are just as bad. All I can say is, whatever sort of brothers do they possess? Now, can you possibly tell me of some sort of a game which can't damage them, and which will get them out of doors and make them run about and use their muscles. I should be awfully glad if you would, and also, if you would say if you approve of my scheme of reform. Then, you see, I will quote you, and they will take more notice of me when backed up by such . . . (here follows an unpublishable sentence). It is a very serious matter, for there are hundreds of these schools in England, all full, and all under the same curse of languor. Therefore, the outlook for the next generation is far from pleasant. I can't think how people who take no exercise can live; in fact, I do not think they ought to live; but, as I am only a girl, they laugh at me and my fads. Now, I would not mind that if they would only consider them seriously as well and give them a fair trial. If I were a boy, the thing would be easy enough; for girls, and especially art students, will follow a strong boy wherever he cares

to lead. As the matter stands, however, they think me a very masculine creature, which I am not, and put up with me because I turn out respectable work and have a few qualities which appeal to them. They say they have no time for dumb-bells and games and things. But I can't see that to train the mind and neglect the body is right, can you? It is so incomplete and so far from being thorough; and to be strong no more means to be a fool than to be unwholesome means to be a genius. I hope it is not cheek to tell you all this and to ask your advice. My brothers have all tried to knock the cheek out of me, but I don't know if they have managed it." Now, this is about the soundest letter I have ever had from a correspondent. "Bingo Mam," I am with you hand and glove; and I hope that nothing will ever knock out of you the sort of cheek you possess. The chances are that, with your sane mind and energy of character, you will succeed in your attempts at reformation. You might point out to your fellow-students that the perfect beauty of the Greek physical ideal, which no doubt both you and they admire so much, was the result of open-air exercise and of training in the gymnasia. You might also tell them that if they err in following you, they err with Plato. You might tell them that music, a word understood by the Greeks rather in the sense which we attach to education, aimed at producing perfect proportion and harmony, not only of mind, but of body; indeed, of both together. For the rest, "Bingo," I cannot give you better advice than to go on as you have begun. Please write again.

Old Racer writes to tell me my papers on athletics have all one defect, to wit, that I never allude to the importance of breathing long deep breaths as a means of expanding the lungs. "Allow a horseman," he says, "to remind you that a horse gallops with his lungs: boys and athletes do feats of endurance with their lungs. There is far too much running with an open mouth. You should scold your young readers who do this." No doubt there is a great deal in what "Old Racer" says, and I commend his remarks to the attention of my athletic inquirers. I intend to make myself acquainted with the scientific relation between breathing and running, and will henceforth produce my gleanings for the benefit of the readers of THE CAPTAIN. Would "O. R." put me on to any literature on the subject?

Brightelmstone.—I am pleased to tell you that the bat with which I made six hundreds in succession last year—jolly good piece of luck, too—was made by a Warsopp, also that it weighed 2lbs. 8ozs. I am pleased to say that it is as good as, if not better than, new at the present moment, and is being taken considerable care of. Yes, I like an indiarubber handle on my bat; it gives a good grip. There are several good books on cricket besides Ranji's; for instance, W. L. Murdoch's, in the "Oval" Series, and also the Badminton Library volume; and I hope there will be another one better still later on. You can guess the author.

W. R. Creeke.—Sorry I could not answer your questions in October. Circumstances did not permit. If the bails are knocked off the wickets previously, a man cannot be bowled out, however obviously the ball hits the wicket subsequently; but in the case of a run out, the batsman is out if the fieldsman who takes the ball pulls out a stump, ball in hand. I am glad to hear that you are such a keen sports man, and also that you find THE CAPTAIN improves every month; THE CAPTAIN will continue to improve, I assure you, though you might think there is not much room for improvement.

C. J. Hunt.—Thank you very much for your congratulations; you do me proud! I certainly hope to play a lot of football this season. Too good a game to give up, isn't it? Of course, I agree with you that THE CAPTAIN is the best magazine for boys; that is what it lives for.

Box.—It is observant on your part to notice that Ranji is, in more senses than one, a good stayer. His ability to make so many runs without getting tired is not a little due to the fact that he makes even his hardest strokes without much expenditure of effort; you see, he times the ball so well. But also, by nature, he possesses great stamina. It is difficult to advise people how to acquire stamina; the chief thing is to live a regular, wholesome, fresh-air life. What "we fellows," as you call us, do after a long innings is sit down and feel pleased with ourselves; though some of us, of course, have to sit down and write answers to correspondents, like this. My favourite drink between innings, it may amuse you to hear, is a mixture of soda water and stone ginger beer—ginger beer out of stone bottles, I mean.

Old Rugbeian.—So you are a Rugby man converted to "Soccer." Good! As to getting into decent condition, I do not think you can beat an occasional long walk, and now and then a run twice round a meadow. You might, of course, do dumb-bells in moderation daily. But you must do proper exercises. One game a week should do the rest for you. The part of the head to use in "heading" the ball is the point of your forehead where your horn would grow if you were a unicorn. The best way to practise shooting on a lawn or in a yard, is to get either a very small football or a big grey indiarubber ball and practice, as it were, in miniature, wearing tennis or fives shoes. I do not think at your age that moderate smoking spoils condition. I certainly think that a man, when well and strong, is better without alcohol. Thank you for your kind wishes.

E. A. Huges.—Glad you have summoned up energy to write. Any athletic outfitter will get buttons put on an old pair of foils for you. The best author for a boy of thirteen? Well, if you mean storytellers, some excellent fellows write for THE CAPTAIN. If you mean classics, I recommend Walter Scott; he was my favourite author at your age. I do not know who my favourite author is now, I have so many; I rather think George Eliot.

Evelyn P.—The fact is, madam, I do not as a rule give replies except to regular subscribers to this magazine, and, you know, you say you don't often read THE CAPTAIN. However, we will presume you intend to take us in, properly, you know, in future. The worst of it is, I am not much of an authority on tennis. The best way for you to keep in condition during the winter is to do what you don't like—that is, to take sound and regular walking exercise. Also, you might try a certain amount of work with light wooden dumb-bells on a proper system. Your food is all right; don't bother a stitch about it. On tournament days a mutton chop makes an excellent lunch. Your playing practice strikes me as right, but don't overdo it: and knock off a day now and then if you feel jaded or stale. Stick to the racquet that suits you. I vote for knickerbockers as against petticoats, easy. I rather think very thin flannel is better than cotton next the skin. A jacket is not enough to put on after getting hot, especially on a cold day; get a woollen sweater to wear under your jacket. Sand shoes are as good as anything; yes, I think you must have spiked shoes on a wet ground. I don't think you need bother about a gymnasium. I

advise you to stick to your under hand service. You can find out all about Queen's Club by writing to the secretary. You strike me as one likely to overdo training, etc.; remember it is the happy medium that pays best.

K. Jower.—My New Zealand friend, you are a marvel, if, at the age of thirteen, you can wield a 12lb. bat! I know that trout run large in your country, but——! Is it 2lbs. you mean? If so, and if you are a strong lad, the weight should just about suit you.

A. B. C.—My opinion of L. C. Palairet coincides with yours; he certainly ranks with the best. I think, perhaps, Cranfield is a better bowler than Tyler now, but not as good as Tyler used to be. I play football a good deal; it is a better game than cricket in the winter, not in the summer. My highest jump is 5ft. 9½ins. Glad to hear you like THE CAPTAIN so much and intend to take it in for evermore. A very proper spirit, "A. B. C." Your cricket reminiscences are decidedly interesting.

Bromley Baker.—Your chest measurement is all right. Boys are most variable in this respect, but they grow, you know. Stick to your exerciser in moderation. No, cricket has not got much of a hold yet awhile in South Wales, but with the help of Mr. J. H. Brain & Co. it will. I do not agree with you that the English team in Australia is a weak one. I think it will win a test match or two.

Yorkshireman.—No, my friendly "Tyke," if a batsman hits a ball very high and runs several runs before he is caught, these runs do not count; the man is judged to be caught directly off the bat. Yes, practice is the best way to improve running and staying power; but see what is said above by "Old Racer." I do live in Hampshire. Ranjitsinhji has no Christian names. The initials K. S. stand for Kumar Shri, which is a title. The fielder in your Kodak foreground is Tait. Hawkins, of Brighton, is good for cricket photographs. Kindly tell your sister that I was not posing in the photograph she took of me, but was examining the soles of my boot to see if any nails had come out. She is just like the rest—always finding fault with county cricketers. Poor fellows, they lead a hard life!

J. H. Bertail.—Sir, you are my first French correspondent; allow me to grip you heartily by the hand. Bring along some others. Slightly French by extraction myself. Your English is excellent; far better than a lot I read in the newspapers. June 26th or 27th is the date of the Coronation. I do not advise you to get cricket flannels from a sports depôt. Get your own tailor to make you a pair. The price you mention is sufficient. I cannot recall the particular match in which Rhodes got all ten wickets for less than fifty runs. But he is always doing something like that, when it rains. I hope you will succeed in persuading your countrymen that cricket is a somewhat different game to croquet. You will be a national benefactor if you succeed in introducing cricket into France. In fine, my friend, accept my good wishes and compliments.

Light Dark Blue.—Correct; it is not usual for the non engaged batsman to give his comrade guard at cricket. That is the umpire's privilege. There is, however, no precise ruling on the point.

O. E. Prest.—I am delighted that you regard me as an old friend, *vide* THE CAPTAIN; that is just exactly what I should like to be to all my numerous correspondents. Have you got your book back yet? If not, write again.

Jack of Boston.—It is quite common for rather overgrown boys like yourself to be a bit shaky. But I have known heaps of fellows who started at about your age with knock-knees and bad health, grow up into fine strong men. The thing for boys of your sort is to take as much outdoor exercise as possible without over-doing it. Probably the system known as free gymnastics, as practised by Army recruits and in the military training schools, would be an admirable help to you. I expect you can get a little drill book on the subject from Gale & Polden, of Aldershot.

J. Steel.—See above. Kicking a ball about in a barn or gymnasium, if you can manage it, is admirable practice for football. A bit of a run two or three times a week, in the evening, would do your team good; but, of course, matches themselves are the best means for a football team to gain proficiency.

Ironclad.—So you are going bow-legged? Well, you know, I rather doubt that at your age. People usually grow bow-legged when they are quite toddlers or not at all. However, slight bow-leggedness often goes along with great strength. I should be inclined to advise you not to bother about it. But you certainly won't do yourself any harm by using the exercises you mentioned. If there is really anything wrong with you, you ought to consult a doctor.

A. Carver.—You will find heaps of advice on training in back numbers of THE CAPTAIN, both in articles and among answers to correspondents. A boy at school does not need much training; none at all in the matter of diet and habits of life. But, of course, you ought to practise systematically the particular form of athletics you are taking up. Go on the principle of "slow and sure," in amount per diem, I mean.

C. B. Fry.

"BRITAIN'S BULWARKS."

"Britain's Bulwarks" is the title of a beautifully produced album of forty-eight pictures, by Mr. Charles Dixon, the famous marine artist, the main idea of which is to present an interesting history of the British navy, past and present, by grouping together our modern ironclads with their namesakes which were once among the "wooden walls of England." These pictures, with the accompanying letterpress, contributed by naval experts, form a very complete pictorial and literary record of how and why "Britannia rules the waves." The price is 10s. 6d. net, and it is published by George Newnes, Limited.

A Life for a Life

By George Allen

Illustrated by Arthur Hoddy

THEY were indeed a strangely assorted pair, and it was little wonder that people should stop and stare after them as they passed through the streets. The one, Juan, a handsome man of a little over medium height, with dark eyes that on occasion lit up with passionate fire; the other, Jules, a hunchback boy of most ugly face, at sight of whom the children would run and hide and grown-up persons cross themselves, calling upon the Virgin for protection against the machinations of the devil and his agents. For surely, thought they, none but an evil spirit could abide in this ugly little hunchback. Walking beside Juan, Jules reminded one of a poor little mongrel hanging by the heels of a master for whom he entertained a half-savage affection.

The handsome man and the ugly boy were never seen apart, and people wondered what was the bond between the two.

The bond was the strongest that can bind human beings—the bond of a love that has grown out of the sympathy of the strong for the weak and outcast, on the one hand, out of the thankfulness of the downtrodden for the hand that puts forth to raise it, on the other. And this was the manner of its forging.

Strolling home one night from the bull-ring at Seville, filled with the satisfaction that his first appearance in the greatest ring of Spain had been a stupendous success, Juan—for he was a matador, afterwards the greatest of his time—came across a little, hunchback child clothed in dirty rags, lying in the shelter of a doorway, and moaning in a heart-rending manner. Juan's heart was touched, and he bent over the child, asking the reason of his sobs.

"I am hungry—starving," cried the child. "Since sunrise yesterday I have tasted no food. The people drive me away from their doors when I go there to beg. They call me by hard names and tell me that my ugliness frightens their little ones. I have walked many miles, and I am weary, but no one will give me to eat."

And so the little chap had thrown himself down in the doorway, feeling, more from instinct than from definite teaching, that when he awoke in the morning it would be in a brighter land, where there would be none to drive him from the door because of his ugliness.

Juan's heart was still soft; the dangers of the ring had not brutalised nor hardened him. Here was he, the hero of the hour, gold and favours showered upon him at every hand, the new-found idol of the people: before him this poor little fellow dying of hunger.

"Come with me, my child, and you shall eat your fill and sleep in a wholesome bed; and to-morrow we will see what can be done for you."

He took him along to his hotel, much to the disgust of the proprietor, who, indeed, had

driven the hunchback from the door but an hour before. Now, however, when the misshapen mite came hand in hand with the rich Juan, it was different.

The next day, Jules told all he knew of his history. He remembered his father, but had no recollection of his mother. His father had died, and, the neighbours turning from the poor little orphan because of the loathing he inspired, the priests had placed Jules in a school. He was not happy there, for the other boys would not associate with him, but would mock and jeer at him. At last, feeling that he could stand that miserable life no longer, he had fled.

That was three years before, and the youngster had roamed the country, begging from door to door, sometimes getting shelter at night, but more often huddling himself to sleep beneath a hedgerow or a doorway.

Juan took to the little chap, who, now that he was well fed and well clothed, was bright and entertaining. He determined to keep him by him for a few days until he could make up his mind what to do with him. But the days went by and still he did not part with the boy.

Liking ripened into love, and though Juan many times made plans for handing the boy over to someone whom he would pay to look after him, he could not bring himself to face the parting when the time came. Little wonder that the boy came to worship his protector.

So it happened that three more years went by and the pair were still unparted. From fight to fight the two went together, Juan always providing his *protégé*—now a boy of fourteen—with the best seat the house provided, so that he might be able to see the fray well. How the poor deformed boy envied those strong and agile men in the ring! How he bemoaned the fate that kept him weak and unsightly! But there was one thing left to him, and that was to rejoice at the triumphs of Juan. As time went on he began to feel that he, too, had a part in his protector's victories, and rejoiced as though he himself had won.

Juan had come again to Seville to fight his last fight. He was about to marry a lady who loved him too well to desire to see him risking his life in the ring, and so, having saved a considerable fortune, he was about to bid good-bye to the ring and to settle down away in the country.

To this last fight, young Jules came with a heavy heart. No more would he sit in the front of great crowds admiring the skill of their beloved Juan. No more would he spring to his feet and cheer with the crowd as Juan emerged triumphant from the contest and stood with his foot planted upon the flank of his fallen foe, bowing to the people. The gorgeous pageant had little interest for Jules that day.

NOW IS JUAN'S TIME.

True, Juan had promised to take the boy with him to his new home. But the new life would not be like the old, thought Jules. There would always be someone between them, someone who would have more claim to Juan's love than a poor little crippled boy. Jules

would have hated the newcomer but that Juan loved her; and whom Juan loved was sacred in the boy's eyes.

The president came forward and took his place in the little box beside the big white platform, which was reserved for special visitors, but in the very front of which Jules was seated.

Then the door at the end of the arena opened and in rode the three matadors, Juan in the centre, followed by the banderilleros, chulos, and picadors. The procession rode up past the president of the day, saluting him with all the customary ceremony; then the men arranged themselves round the walls of the ring.

The heralds flourish their trumpets, the great door flies open, and a bull trots nimbly forward. A chulo jumps forward and stands with folded arms about twenty paces in front of the bull. Forward rushes the animal; his horns are down and it seems that the chulo must certainly be transfixed; but no, just as the bull reaches him, the chulo slips aside and the animal rushes onward.

And as the game goes on, chulos flit hither and thither, waving their red cloaks before the very eyes of the now infuriated animal.

Then a picador rides forward upon a sorry mount that, too old and weak for work, has been bought specially for slaughter. The picador carries a lance, and his legs are protected by leggings of sheet iron. Right in front of the bull he rides; then there is a sudden charge, the picador's lance goes home in the bull's shoulder, and the man jumps off just as the great horn drives into the horse's body.

And so the game goes on until at last, when the bull is sufficiently maddened, the matador comes forward. Calmly, Juan walks up to the president, doffs his cap, and makes the usual formal speech, to which the president replies. This ceremony finished, Juan throws his cap to the audience, who scramble for the honour of holding it. But Juan always takes care that the cap falls near to Jules, and the latter clutches at it greedily and holds it proudly till the performance is over.

Then Juan walks forward to face the bull, which is now weakening from loss of blood; the matador, sword in hand, flourishes his little red flag, jumping aside as the bull charges harmlessly forward. Again and again this happens until, at last, it is time to cease teasing and take to actual fight.

Juan is now just below the grand stand, where Jules sits, in front of which it is the custom to dispatch the bull—or to be dispatched, if the fates be not kind.

Now is Juan's time.

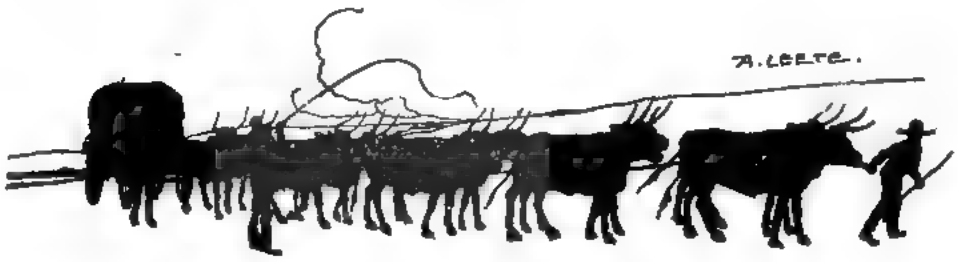
A wave of the flag, a short rush on the part of the bull, and—the matador trips up in the very act of stepping aside.

There is no hope of escape, and the crowd closes its eyes and waits.

With a cry, Jules rises and springs forward. The next instant the terrible horns wear a foil—a foil of human flesh.

Juan is on his feet again, and in a moment the bull is stretched lifeless on the ground.

The crowd heave a sigh of relief. Their hero is saved, and it is only the little hunchback who is dead.



GOLD COAST COLONY.

WE hear a great deal just now about the Gold Coast and the gold which financiers and public company promoters tell us should be found there. The colony, no doubt, owes its name to the gold dust which the natives have from very early times used for bartering with Europeans. The colony has a coast line of 350 miles on the West Coast of Africa. The French possession of the Ivory Coast bounds it on the west, and on the east it joins the German Colony of Togoland. In the earliest days of settlement we had a scramble for possession with the Danes and our old competitors, the Dutch. We bought out the Danes, and the Dutch also cleared out later on for economical reasons and left us in sole possession. The little colony is now governed as a Crown colony, *i.e.*, by officials appointed by the home Government. It has a population of 1,500,000, and Accra, the seat of Government, is a town of 16,267 inhabitants.

The philatelic history of the colony commences with the issue of three stamps in 1875 of the then current design used by Messrs. De la Rue for most of the colonies whose stamps they printed. The same design remained in use till the issue of the current series in 1889. It is a compact and attractive little stamp country. The first issue, consisting of three values and the few issues of 1883, are rather expensive, and the second issue of 1876-79 is trending in the same direction. Otherwise, the country is not an expensive one, and the issues are few and free from complications.

1875.—Three values in the then current De la Rue colonial design, watermarked C.C. and perforated 12½. The words of value in the bottom tablet, though in the same colour, were printed separately, the same design being used for all values. Boys who are fortunate enough to get a few of this first issue may find a difference of shade in the two printings.

GOLD COAST.

WATERMARK C.C. PERF. 12½.

	Unused. s. d.	Used. s. d.
1d. blue	60 0	30 0
4d. magenta ...	30 0	35 0
6d. orange ...	—	25 0

1876-79.—Five values same design, and still watermarked C.C., but perforated 14. The 4d. mauve of this issue is a scarce and difficult stamp to get. In 1896 it might have been had at the catalogue price of 1s. 6d., and every old boy who then failed to add it to his collection will now regret the oversight, for in 1897 Gibbons left it unpriced, and in 1899 raised it to 42s. 6d., and it is still going up, being now catalogued at 55s. Its scarcity is probably due to the number used up for surcharging for use as penny stamps.

WATERMARK C.C. PERF. 14.

	Unused. s. d.	Used. s. d.
½d. olive yellow	5 0	5 0
1d. blue	2 0	1 6
2d. green	12 6	2 0
4d. mauve...	55 0	3 6
6d. orange	12 6	4 0

1883.—In this year a number of the then current 4d. mauve, C.C., perf. 14, were surcharged "1d." in black. Strange to say, Gibbons omitted this stamp from the catalogue

of 1899 on the ground that it was not known if it was officially issued, whereas, so long ago as 1888, that question was settled when an official in reply to an inquiry wrote: "Fourpenny stamps surcharged 1d. in printing were issued here by authority for a very short time." The London Philatelic Society, in Part II. of their recently published work on our African Colonies, says the authenticity of the stamp is beyond question, and adds: "It is of the greatest rarity, and only two specimens are known to the society, one being in the Tapling collection, the other in a famous collection in Paris." Consequently, the stamp has been restored to catalogue rank.

Two other stamps were issued in this year, each of which is very scarce. They are the ½d. olive yellow and the 1d. blue, but on paper watermarked C.A. Probably only small supplies of these two stamps in the old colours on the C.A. paper were sent out, as the new series in changed colours that followed must have been in course of preparation at the time.

WATERMARK C.C. PERF. 14.
1d. on 4d. mauve.

WATERMARK C.A. PERF. 14.

	Unused.	Used.
	s. d.	s. d.
½d. olive yellow	40 0	15 0
1d. blue	—	15 0

1884-89.—Commencing in 1884, a new series in new colours, and with 3d., 1s., and 2s. as new values, was issued; the 3d. and 6d. values were not issued till 1899. The ½d. was changed from olive green to pale green, the 1d. from blue to rose carmine, and the 2d. from green to grey. The 4d. and the 6d. were printed in their old colours. The watermark was C.A., and the perf. 14 as before. The 6d. orange of this issue is an improving stamp, and should be secured whilst it is reasonably priced. It has risen from 8d. in 1899 to 2s. 6d. in 1900, and 3s. 6d. in the recently issued Gibbons for 1902.

WATERMARK C.A. PERF. 14.

	Unused.	Used.
	s. d.	s. d.
½d. pale green	0 2	0 1
1d. rose carmine	0 3	0 1
2d. grey	0 6	0 3
3d. greenish yellow	0 9	0 4
4d. mauve	0 9	0 4
6d orange	3 6	0 4
1s. violet	1 9	0 8
2s. brown	8 6	2 0

1889.—In March of this year a provisional 1d. was issued. It was made by surcharging the then current 6d. orange with the words "One Penny" in two lines in small capitals, with a thick bar obliterating the original value at the foot of the stamp. This provisional, according to the London Philatelic Society's Part II. of Africa, was first issued for use in Accra, but its use was subsequently (in July) extended to the out districts of the colony. Presumably the surcharge was, in the first instance, made to meet a shortage in Accra, and as outlying stations, which relied upon Accra for supplies, ran short, the provisional had to be sent them pending the arrival of supplies from England.

WATERMARK C.A. PERF. 14.

	Unused.	Used.
	s. d.	s. d.
"One Penny" on 6d. orange ...	30 0	8 6

1891-94.—Four new values, viz., 2½d., 5s., 10s., and 20s. For the 2½d. the old design was used, with the value at the foot of the stamp printed in a separate colour. The higher values were of the newest De la Rue colonial design, and were printed in two colours. The 20s., issued first in green and red, was shortly afterwards changed to lilac and black on red, now the current stamp.

WATERMARK C.A. PERF. 14.

	Unused.	Used.
	s. d.	s. d.
2½d. ultr., value in orange	0 6	0 2
5s. lilac, name and value in blue .	12 6	3 6
10s. .. .. .. red		3 6
20s. green		

1898-1900.—This, the current series, is of the general De la Rue colonial design, as illustrated. It is the same design as was used for the higher values in the 1891-94 issues. In the lower values of this series, ½d. to 6d., the body of the stamp is printed lilac, and the name and value in a different colour. In the higher values, from 1s. upwards, the body of the stamp is printed in green and the name and value in second colours.

GOLD COAST.

WATERMARK C.A. PERF. 14.

	Unused.	Used.
	s. d.	s. d.
½d. lilac, name and value in green ...	0 1	0 1
1d. .. .. . red ...	0 2	0 1
2½d. .. .. .. ultr. ...	0 4	—
3d. . . .. orange ..	0 5	0 4
6d. .. .. .. mauve ...	0 8	0 5
1s. green . .. .. black ..	1 4	1 1
2s. .. .. .. carmine	2 8	1 0
5s. .. . .. lilac ..	6 6	—
10s. .. .. .. brown	12 6	—

REVIEWS.

WE have received Messrs. Whitfield King & Co.'s excellent "Universal Catalogue for 1902." It is the catalogue for the beginner, for it is free from the multitude of minor varieties that gladdens the

specialist, but hopelessly confuses the beginner. This edition has been thoroughly revised from cover to cover by Mr. Whitfield King himself, and is now by far the very best guide with which to start stamp collecting, and, as the price is only 1s. 3d., every boy should provide himself with a copy. With its help he may do his own valuations.

The following statistics, compiled from the catalogue, may not be uninteresting. The figures comprise only standard varieties of postage stamps, and do not include post-cards, letter-cards, stamped envelopes, or wrappers.

The total number of all known varieties of postage stamps issued by all the Governments of the world up to the present time is 16,081. Of this number, 141 have been issued in Great Britain and 4,342 in the various British colonies and protectorates, leaving 11,598 for the rest of the world. Dividing the totals amongst the continents, Europe issued 3,823; Asia, 2,966; Africa, 2,775; America, including the West Indies, 5,268; and Oceania, 1,249. A comparison of these figures with those published in April, 1900, will show that 1,455 new varieties of stamps have been issued throughout the world in the space of eighteen months.

The Republic of Salvador has issued more varieties of postage stamps than any other country, the number being 403. Next in order come the United States, with 303; Spain, with 293; followed by Nicaragua, with 279; the Philippines, 228; Uruguay, 221; Victoria, 220; Cuba, 217; and Mexico, 214. Boyaca, Poland, Terra del Fuego, and Wadhwan have each found a solitary specimen suffice for their postal needs.

Messrs. Bright & Son have brought their well-known "A.B.C." catalogue up to date by means of a supplement of forty-three pages, exceptionally well printed. It includes even stamps which we chronicled only last month. The illustrations are among the best that have ever been included in a stamp catalogue.

Mr. L. S. Charlick, of Victoria Chambers, Chancery Lane, E.C., sends us a retail price list of his stock, mostly used copies. So far as we have examined the prices they seem to be more or less tempting, and we note that numbers of common stamps which, in the ordinary catalogues, are priced 1d. each, are offered by Mr. Charlick at ½d. each.

We have also on our table another catalogue, issued by our friends of the South Africa Company, who make a speciality of South Africans, as well they may, having the advantage of branches at Cape Town, Bloemfontein, and Johannesburg. We have seen much of the stock of this company, and have noted the careful selection of good copies.

SOME INTERESTING NEW ISSUES.

We are now authoritatively told that some of the new King Edward postage stamps will be issued early this month, and the remainder at varying dates hereafter, as the supply of the present stamps becomes exhausted. The values of the stamps will range from ½d. to £5 as now. In the design, merely the head of the King is shown, looking to the left, without the crown, which, however, appears at the top of the design. In other respects there is to be no change in the design of the stamps, except in the case of the ½d., 1d., 2½d., and 6d. In these the design shows the head of the King in an upright oval, on the left of which is a branch of bay, and on the right a branch of oak leaves. The new 1d. will be red, and the new 6d. mauve.

The new issues of the month include one or two notable novelties. The new Chilians, engraved by the American Bank Note Company, can now be compared with the discarded Waterlow stamps. Most collectors, I think, will agree that the American is no improvement upon the effective Waterlow design. The Gold Coast Colony has started using up its high values by overprinting them for use as low values, to make way for the King Edward stamps. CAPTAIN readers will do well to secure these at new issue rates as they come out. Some of them are almost certain to become scarce.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA.—We have from Messrs. Whitfield King & Co. a 7s. 6d. stamp, as a new value to add to the current series. The design is that of the 5s., which we illustrate.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA.

CHILL.—So long ago as the November number of THE CAPTAIN I mentioned the report that this country was said to be dissatisfied with the Waterlow design (see illustration in January CAPTAIN, page 324), and that a new series had been ordered from the American Bank Note Company. The first stamp of the new series has come to hand, and we append an illustration. It is a 5c. blue. The portrait, of course, is that of Columbus.

CHILL

COCHIN.—Most readers will have seen the curious stamps of the first issue of the native Indian State of Cochin, with its central group of hieroglyphics. The *Monthly Circular* has

received from the Postmaster of the State the following interesting description of the design:—

COCHIN.

The *umbrella* on the left represents the Hindu emblem of Royalty. The *palanquin* or palkee on the right, one of the prerogatives of royalty, as none but a Sovereign could in ancient days ride on a palkee. *Conch*, the device of the rajahs of Kerala (viz., the Zamorin of Calicut and the rajahs of Travancore and Cochin) adopted from the tradition that Parsurama made the land of Malabar to rise out of the sea, west of the Western Ghauts, by blowing his conch. The top device represents the crown.

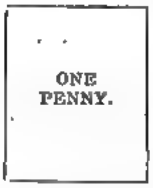
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.—A new series, of the design illustrated, has been issued. The values and colours are as follows:—

½c., lilac and carmine.
1c. ,, olive green.
2c. ,, dark green.
5c. ,, orange brown.
10c. ,, orange.
20c. ,, marone.
50c. ,, black.
1p. ,, dark brown.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.

FRENCH COLONIES.—*Dahomey.*—Messrs. Whitfield King & Co. send us the 1c., black on blue, name in tablet in carmine. *Guadeloupe.*—Also the 5c. in the new shade (apple green). *St. Perre et Miquelon.*—And the 10c., carmine, overprinted "Colis Postaux," for parcel post.

GOLD COAST.—Two provisionals have been issued in this colony. They are made by surcharging two stamps of the current series, the 2½d. and 6d., with the words "ONE PENNY" in black.



With the view of clearing the way for an early issue of the new King's head stamps, the colony, we are told, intends to use up its current stock by surcharging the high values for use as low values as required.

"ONE PENNY" on 2½d. lilac and blue, same on 6d. lilac and violet.

INDIA.—*Bhor.*—Messrs. Whitfield King & Co. send us a ½d. stamp of new design for this native state, which we illustrate. Bhor is a native state within the political agency of Satara, in the Deccan, Bombay. The portrait on the stamp is presumably that of the ruling chief, but it is a very crude print in carmine on common paper, unperforated.

INDIA.

ITALY.—We have received the high values of the current series. The 40c. and 50c. are similar in design to the 10c. illustrated. The 45c., which we illustrate, is slightly different in the framing of the portrait.

ITALY.

40c., brown.
45c., olive.
50c., violet.

ITALY.

MAURITIUS.—Messrs. Whitfield King & Co. send us a 15c. value to add to the current arms type. The series up to date consists of the following:—

1c. grey black.
2c. purple.
4c. purple on yellow paper, value in red.
15c. blue green, value in red.

MAURITIUS

NORTH BORNEO.—Here are two illustrations of the latest productions of the North Borneo Company. At first sight we were much puzzled by the surcharge "British Protectorate." One would imagine from the sudden appearance of such an overprint that the "British Protectorate" had only just been proclaimed. As a matter of fact, it was proclaimed so long ago as 1888. In order to clear up the mystery, we wrote the secretary of the North Borneo Company for an explanation. He writes: "In reply to the question addressed to us on the and inst., on behalf of the stamp-collecting readers of THE CAPTAIN, I am directed to say that the State of North Borneo became a British Protectorate in 1888, and that the Court of Directors do not feel called upon to explain their reason for making the surcharge referred to." Comment is unnecessary. No reader of THE CAPTAIN should waste his money on such rubbish. We decline to publish any list of such stamps.

NORTH BORNEO.

NORTH BORNEO.

OUR NEW FOOTBALL RULES

Illustrated by Harry Rountree.

DEAR SIR,—The success of our last meeting was so marked (many of our members bear the marks to this day), that our football committee was encouraged to call a similar one (only quite different) to discuss the rules relating to the game of football, since many of us object to those in vogue as unscientific and unintelligible. We had some difficulty this time in electing a chairman. The Sultan of Turkey, who usually occupies that position on account of his age and infirmities, resolutely declined the honour on this occasion on the plea that every motion proposed made him sea sick, and it seemed as if the chair would have to remain empty, when we suddenly discovered that we had among our number a chairman by profession. He was unanimously elected in spite of his appeals for mercy, and was eventually pitched head first into the vacant seat. He proved a great success, since nobody paid the least attention to him, and everybody agreed that we could not have had a better (bath) chairman.

The subject before the house was the Rules of Football, but before considering these it was generally admitted to be highly desirable to have a definition of the word "Football." What, then, is football? The professor, a wonderful genius, as his "Essay on Preferential Polypus" proves, remarked that an analysis of the word would lead to curious and unexpected results. "What," he would ask "was a ball?" It was true that it was sometimes a sphere, but it was also a meeting of both sexes for enjoyment. With what, then, was that enjoyment most intimately connected? With the foot. Hence the word "Football," which most undoubtedly referred to dancing. He moved that football be considered to mean dancing. Here the captain hastily rose, and, extracting from his tail-pocket his favourite brick, replied that he would answer the Professor in his own language. What was it that he held in his hand? A brick. For what purpose was a brick? It was true that it was sometimes used for the purpose of erection, of elevation; but was also intimately connected with flooring, and he added that he would floor with that brick anyone who dared to assert that football meant dancing. The Professor instantly withdrew his motion, pronouncing himself convinced that his reasoning was erroneous. Here he burst into tears and warmly embraced the captain, who patted him affectionately on the back with the brick.

This little difference being settled, we pro-

ceeded to the consideration of the new rules. For some time there was a slight difficulty, owing to the Great Mogul insisting on their being called "Foot rules," 'for short," as he said, but somebody, with a heavy round ruler, ruled him out of order, and he subsided on the floor. This being satisfactorily arranged, the professor arose and proposed the first rule. It ran as follows: "On the same base, and on the same side of it, there cannot be two captains having their sides, which are terminated by one extremity of the base, equal to one another, and likewise their sides, which are terminated by the other extremity of the base." This he proceeded to demonstrate, with the aid of a blackboard and a piece of charcoal, but the meeting considered it to be self-evident, and passed it *nem. con.* But I will not weary you with an account of all the debate. Suffice it to say that after a most improving and spirited discussion, we drew up a set of rules which we

PATTED HIM AFFECTIONATELY ON THE BACK WITH A BRICK.

are confident will rouse the interest and gain the applause of all who are interested in this gentle pastime.

OUR NEW RULES.

(1) THEOREM.—On the same base, and on the same side of it, there cannot be two captains, etc., etc. *O.E.D.*

(2) DEFINITION. — The lines defining the boundary of the field of play shall be suitably marked, in ink, if possible, and, if not, in black pencil, and players are forbidden to play in rubber shoes for fear of rubbing out the lines.

(3) POSTULATE.—Let it be granted that you must draw the line somewhere.

(4) AXIOM.—If in a part of the ground there be a hole, this is considered to be larger than that part of the ground in which it is situated, since "the hole is greater than its part."

(5) PROBLEM.—If two players from opposite directions come together in the same straight line, the latter is put in the ambulance.

(6) DEFINITION.—The extremity (or end) of every game is points.

(7) THE BALL.—Anybody guilty of blowing up or offering violence to the ball will be fined 6d.

(8) INSIDE.—When once the game is started the ball cannot be kicked or picked up by anybody who is inside. N.B.—This is self evident.

(9) CHARGING.—A list of charges will be hung up in the refreshment tent.

(10) DEAD BALL LINE.—If the ball cross the dead ball line it is considered to be dead, and an inquest will be held at once. It is etiquette for both sides to attend the funeral.

(11) IN TOUCH.—A ball is "in touch" as

long as you can reach it. If you can't, it is "out of touch."

(12) TOUCH DOWN.—When an injured player is laid on a feather-bed, he is said to "touch down."

(13) TOUCH JUDGES.—You mustn't touch judges even with a pair of tongs.

(14) DROP KICK.—Is a kick delivered to an adversary to make him drop the ball.

(15) PLACE KICK.—A place is defined as a particular locality, spot, situation, station, position, site, etc., etc., etc. Any fellow who doesn't know what a place kick is after that must be a fool.

(16) FREE KICK.—Is when you get the referee's leave to kick anything or anybody. The corollary to a free kick is a general scrimmage.

(17) A TRY.—Is when you try hard to kick the ball and miss it. N.B.—You generally fall on your trousers.

(18) A FAIR CATCH.—Is when you catch the referee with a view to ducking him in the horse-pond.

(19) A SCRUMMAGE OR SCRIMMAGE.—Can take place anywhere. Some people kick the ball in a scrimmage, but it is better fun to kick somebody else when he isn't looking.

(20) A PUNT.—Is useful when the floods are out. It is difficult to kick a ball from a punt—you generally go overboard.

(21) A TACKLE.—Is used to haul the ball over the bar, if it is too heavy to do it by hand.

(22) KNOCKING ON.—Means knocking the referee on the head to attract his attention. It is done with something heavy.

(23) A GOAL.—Consists of two uprights and a bar. A goal-keeper can't be too upright. He keeps the bar.

A MOST IMPROVING AND SPIRITED DISCUSSION.

Yours, with fondest love,

NULLUM CORPUS.

P.S.—Ha, ha! Haven't forgotten my Latin, you see!

Tales of the Trenches

THE AUTHOR OF THIS TALE IS THE SOLDIER WITH THE WHITE HANDKERCHIEF.
From a snapshot by C. R. Prance, R.E.

Illustrated by
George Soper

No. VIII.—MACNAMARA'S WOOING.

I.

MACNAMARA looked through the low screen of bushes, and this is what he saw. A woman with a Dutch sun-bonnet, or "kappie," upon her head, spreading out snowy linen to dry in the sunshine. He could not see her face, but that did not matter: his imagination and romantic temperament worked miracles.

"Ah! the foine figgur av her! Ow, the swate craythur, an' the ilygance av the lass!" he murmured admiringly.

He had crept up perilously close to the Boer position, and only the river separated him from their sharpshooters. He was doing a little scouting on his own, for he could not understand why the British did not advance and drive the Dutch from the low circular plateau behind the town. The fact was, that the British general was waiting for one or more columns to close in upon the enemy from the north and east, and cut off their retreat; but then the general had neglected to take the private into his confidence, and the result was that in the meantime Macnamara and many more of a like temperament were waxing impatient and spoiling for mischief—Macnamara in particular. He had caught a glimpse of the fair maid in question on the previous day, through Reynolds' Zeiss glasses, and to-day he had, with the cunning of a snake and a Job-like patience, crawled to within a few hundred yards of the outlying homestead. His irrepressible love of adventure carried him along.

Macnamara, as has been said before, had always been a great ladies' man. Indeed, this anxiety to stand well in their eyes had not infrequently caused him to suffer rebuffs that would have damped the ardour of most men; but then, most men were not like Macnamara. From where he now was he ascertained that the enemy had vacated the river bank on this, the extreme right front of the position, and had drawn back to the ridge some considerable distance behind the farmhouse, the home of the fair unknown. He had already invested her with all the graces that garnish the creatures of romance. She was to him as the Dulcinea of Don Quixote.

Macnamara watched the unwonted sight until he could remain inactive no longer. In a moment of temporary aberration he put two fingers in his mouth and gave expression to his feelings in a graceful whistle, also meant to attract her attention. But the fair vision made no answering sign. This only instigated him to further recklessness. Disregarding the fact that he might be seen by the enemy, he slid down the bank, and, by wading and swimming, soon reached the opposite shore. He was just clambering up the steep slope when a bullet whistled through the air and embedded itself in the clay within a few feet of his head.

When three or four followed in quick succession, he realised that some of his own comrades had spotted him, and, thinking he was one of the enemy, were having a sporting five minutes.

"Bad luck to thim, shure!" he muttered; "they might have waited until I had seen the lass."

He crawled into a crevasse, and lay still until he thought they would be tired of looking for him. Then he popped over the bank, and made his way among the bushes on the other side.

What his intentions were he did not pause to consider. When he occasionally did consider, he knew what to do, but he was in one of his irresponsible moods just then, and that was his very maddest, the romantic one. That he was in imminent danger of being shot or taken prisoner did not seem to occur to him; he only regretted that he had not shaved that morning or put on a clean shirt. He remembered, however, that he had been washing his khaki riding breeches, and had borrowed a pair of civilian trousers from Macpherson, which he now wore. A dilapidated felt hat crowned his head, so that he much more resembled a member of the Boer army than of the British. An insane idea took possession of him. Suddenly he came face to face with the young woman, who was spreading out some more clothes on the bushes. In another moment his heels came together, and his hat described a lordly sweep. He had once seen this done on the stage, and thought it effective.

"Good mornin' to you, marm," he said, in his most engaging manner; "an' it's a foine mornin' this mornin' for the washin' entoirely."

He would have liked to have put more poetry into his remarks, but he could think of nothing better just at the moment.

She looked him up and down, amusement and curiosity showing upon her face.

"Vhat you vhand here?" she asked, disdaining his small talk regarding the washing. "From vidge commando vas you come?"

"De Wet's, marm," was his unblushing reply. He knew it was the largest, and therefore the safest.

"But vhad you vhand?" she persisted uncompromisingly.

He affected a discreet confusion, rubbed his stubbly chin, looked for daisies in the grass, and then looked up at her. He was an artist in his way, was Terence.

"Shure, an' I've bin here before wid the crowd," he replied sheepishly, but with meaning, "an' I thought I'd like to come again." He gave her another look.

She laughed softly to herself, and her gaze was not unkindly.

"Bah! you are one strange man, Irishman! Vas it really to see me you come?"

"Troth an' ye've said it! 'Twas the swate loight in yer eyes as did it, mavourneen," he exclaimed with inspiration.

He now caught sight of some men, whom he had not observed before, building a gun-pit on a spur of the ridge, and the madness of his actions began to dawn upon him. He would certainly be shot as a spy if he were caught. But his resource did not fail him.

"An' the field-cornet was arskin' me, shure, if you could give him an harb for his toothache."

"Vhad goronet?" she asked.

"It's yer jaw-breaking names, me dear, I'm disrememberin'," he replied. "Jan— Jan——"

"Stoffel?" she suggested.

"That's the man, marm. I niver could git round that name. It's a stiff 'un — like the man."

"Oh, dat vas vhy you come!" she observed, with a little toss of her head. "Den it vas not for der light in mine eyes! If you come to der house I will give you vhad you vhant."

Terence had not bargained on going near the house, but if he drew back now he would only arouse her suspicions as to his identity; besides, she seemed a nice girl. He must go through with the business.

A Kaffir woman was emptying the soap-suds from a tub as he approached the stoep. She was villainously ugly, and looked up at him in a startled and suspicious fashion. She was about to speak when her mistress gave her a sharp order, and she changed her mind, thus relieving the man's apprehensions. It was as if he had got a new lease of life.

He followed the girl into the house, and, to his unspeakable relief and satisfaction, there was no one there. It was a large, roomy building, and in the well-kept kitchen she bade him sit down.

"Irishman," said the woman, "vill you some coffee trink?"

"Can a dhuck swim, marm!" was the ready response; "shure an' it's a dhrink for angels will be a cup from you."

The poetry in his nature was again coming to his aid, and he began to feel more at his ease. He felt sorry, however, that he was still suffering from a sore throat, and he was conscious of his unshaved and somewhat dilapidated appearance.

"Bah!" she said, "why is it all you Irishmen vill talg to me like dhad?" but there was a smile upon her broad face as she took down from the roof the net of dried herbs and roots that constituted the family medicine chest.

She seemed a long time in finding what was

wanted, but while doing so she also found that Terence was a most agreeable person to talk to. No Dutchman had ever told her so many pleasant things about herself. Suddenly she noticed that the Irishman's gaze was fixed in a peculiarly concentrated fashion upon the opposite hillside.

"Vhad is it?" she asked, at the same time looking to see. "Ah! I had forgot, the general and the commandants was here to meet this aidhernoon; now they haf come."

"An' may the old man tek them!" exclaimed poor Terence fervently, "for now I'll be afther bein' took myself like a tod in a hole."

"Vhad?" she asked, eyeing him curiously.

"I mane it'll be moighty inconvanient for me to be found here jist at prisint, an' there's the auld bhoy himself!" explained Macnamara, looking around for some firearm with which to meet the situation. But there were no firearms there.

"Ah, I see!" said the woman, with a look of enlightenment that made him feel uneasy. "You must hide here until dey go avay. Qvick!"

Without a moment's hesitation she ran to a trap-door over which a huge basket of clothes had been placed, and opening it, disclosed a dark cellar underneath.

"Ged in," she commanded.

Macnamara looked. Already he could hear the men's footsteps outside. He did not like the idea, but there was no help for it. He was utterly in the hands of this Boer woman, and he must make the best of things. He must show her that he completely trusted her. He caught up one of her hands and raised it to his lips, but she was impatient and drew it away.

"Bah!" she said. "Ged in."

He blundered down the break-neck wooden stairs; the trap-door was slammed to over his head, and he found himself in utter darkness. He heard a bolt shot, and the basket of clothes pulled back over the hatchway.

"By the blessed St. Pathrick!" he exclaimed, "an' here's a noice ploy! But ah, the swate face o' the lass! Ow, the blue eyes an' the grace av her!"

But here he fell over a box, and dealt no more in platitudes. There was a slight stamping over his head as if to enjoin silence, and in another moment he became aware that three or four men had entered the kitchen and were passing to a room beyond. Terence had picked up the Taal, or so-called language of the Boers, since he had been in the country, so that he could make out what was said. It was undoubtedly the general who asked the woman if they had the house to themselves, and it was the latter who laughingly

"GED IN," SHE COMMANDED.

inquired in her turn if he was trying to be funny. There was one at least in that house who could see nothing funny in the situation.

He could hear the members of the Boer Council pass into an adjoining room, and what surprised him not a little was that he could still hear the murmur of their voices. A thought struck him. He found some matches in his trousers pocket, and carefully struck one. He could see that this cellar ran partly under the adjoining room also.

only, just there, a large number of sacks, filled with some sort of agricultural produce, were piled up nearly to the ceiling. To climb to the top of them and crawl along was the work of a minute. Then he applied his ear to the flooring. He might hear something that would be well worth listening to, and justify his coming there should trouble arise from it, and he had to explain matters to a stern and prosaic commanding officer—that was to say, if he succeeded in getting away with his life, which at that moment seemed rather too much to expect.

He was not disappointed. What he heard was so startling, and of such far-reaching importance to the British, that he fairly trembled with excitement. The Boer scouts had brought in word that Clements' column had been sighted to the south-east, and it had been ascertained that the English general, by a forced march that night, would reach a certain narrow nek at dawn on the following morning. It was therefore arranged by the council that, as it would not be possible to hold their present position when the columns came up, they should move out with most of their guns at dusk to meet them, take up a strong position commanding this nek, or pass—which had doubtless been visited and declared free of the enemy by the British during the day—and, after surprising them, and inflicting what could not but be a crushing defeat, seize their convoy; then, changing their direction, make northward so as to join forces with De Villiers. Their convoy, could also start at dusk, and meet them at a point some fifteen miles to the north. A small mobile force left behind would effectually serve to cover their retreat. If the besieging British rushed their position on the following morning, they would find to their chagrin empty gun-pits and trenches. Of course, this much-to-be-desired end depended upon the British not suspecting their designs—which, of course, under the circumstances, was hardly possible. These movements would have to be carried out with the greatest secrecy. One or two more features of the situation were discussed, then one of the Boers, whom to his disquietude Macnamara concluded must be the owner of the house, said that, now everything was agreed upon, he had some good Hollands gin in his cellar which he could produce, so that they might drink to the success of their projects. At the same moment the Irishman heard a light foot stamp warningly two or three times on the floor in the neighbourhood of the trap-door.

Terence for the moment imagined that he was as good as dead, for he knew that were he now discovered he would most certainly be shot. But he was not the kind of man to give himself up as lost without making an effort of some sort to save the situation. He dislodged a sack, and pulling it partly over him, flattened himself against the wall. Unless the woman gave him away, he might escape the observation of the good man of the house.

He heard the burgher enter the kitchen and pull the basket of clothes from the trap-door. But the woman told him she knew what he wanted, and if he would only get the glasses out of the corner cupboard, she would bring the liquor up herself. She had recently occasion to shift it, and he would not know where it was. The man pooh-poohed the idea, and for a few moments there was something almost like an altercation between them. But the woman was evidently the mistress of the situation, for with a significant raising of her voice, and much noise, she opened the trap-door and descended the stairs. It must have been an anxious moment for the girl, for had her gallant but Quixotic visitor unwittingly addressed her or made his presence known in any way, she would, as well as he, have been in an ugly fix.

"Ss—h!" she hissed warningly, at the same time lifting her hand as she reached the cellar floor.

Macnamara hardly drew breath as he lay close as a rabbit.

She was evidently relieved by not seeing him, for, quickly taking a bottle from a case, she made her exit again, and the trap-door was lowered as before.

"Ah, the swate dream o' light! Ow, the sinse av the lass!" muttered Terence, as he breathed again.

In less than half an hour he had the unspeakable satisfaction of hearing the last man leave the house. He descended from his dusty perch. He was anxious to be off now, for he had a brilliant scheme in his head. If he could only warn the advancing British column of the trap laid for it, he would be Sergeant Macnamara in less than twenty-four hours.

He was about to try and open the trap-door when suddenly it was lifted and a sun-bonneted woman descended. Terence was dazed by the light, but he stepped forward, and, seizing her hand, kissed it fervently, at the same time indulging in some florid language.

But the little hand was rudely snatched away from him with an ejaculation of affright, and a harsh voice cried:—

"Ikona,* baas; plenty fool you I tink!"

It was the Kaffir servant, whom Terence had mistaken for her mistress. At the same time there was a merry laugh from the room above, and a voice he remembered cried:

* A Kaffir negative.

"Ach! I vas tink you Irishmen vas all der same! Vhen you haf feenished will you come here?"

Terence vehemently protested against such misrepresentations as he mounted the steps, but at first the young woman affected to disbelieve him. His susceptible heart was fast becoming as plastic as clay in the hands of the potter, and he was in some danger of forgetting the serious business he had in hand in this fresh and romantic attachment. But the woman brought him to his senses.

"Now, you must go, Irishman," she said. "Your commandant will trek dis night Good-bye!"

"Oh, wurra, wurra!" he moaned, as his sudden love and the thought that he was imperilling the same by thus playing her false occurred to him. "But it's lettin' me come again ye'll be, alana, darlint?" he pleaded.

Either from motives of policy or in her anxiety to get rid of her importunate visitor, she told him he might call upon her again. She was a good-natured woman, if fond of a joke, and mentally concluded that on the morrow he would be much further away than he wotted. He was one of those eccentric Irish aliens who did not know themselves what they wanted.

Then, bidding her an elaborate farewell, Terence Macnamara started out on his perilous undertaking.

II.

The DUSK was coming on apace as he stepped out towards the town. It was a lucky thing for him that not even his boots betrayed his regimental origin, for a spy's death was a very off-hand affair indeed, and his would mean a terrible disaster to the advancing British force. And then the thought that next day his dead body might be discovered by his own comrades, some of whom might even suspect the real cause of his presence there, was soul-harrowing, to say the least of it. To do him justice, he accepted the probable forfeiture of his own life with comparative equanimity. Perhaps what caused him most uneasiness was the reception he might get from the object of his latest infatuation when she discovered he had been sailing under false colours, and had used her goodness to bring disaster upon her people. The thought that he would see her again was something to look forward to, but he would have some trouble in explaining matters.

He passed the end of the long, straggling main street without attracting any particular attention, though he thought some of the slouching, bearded Boers, with rifles in hand and bandoliers on their chests, scrutinised him keenly. Of course it was only imagination on his part, for he was just then as dirty and dilapidated as any of the foreign mercenaries, and no one had the ghost of a suspicion that he did not belong to the Boer army. Some of them, indeed, wished him good-night as he hurried along, and, plucking up courage, he wished them the same. It was evident that already some orders regarding that night's movements had got about, for the burghers seemed full of business.

He left the town, crossed a field, and skirted a wood, where there was a large camp, making for a herd of horses he saw in the distance. In a quiet corner he came across a wagon. In it, among other things, were a saddle and bridle. To put the former on his head was the work of a moment. He had no sooner done this than he was hailed by a voice he knew only too well. He looked around, and there, for the second time in the campaign, he saw his old friend, the arch-renegade Micky Nolan. He was in the act of tying a horse to a tree.

"Well met, Terence," he said, with an ugly grin on his face. "An' what dhivil's thricks brings ye here?"

"Git out av me path, ye perfidious sarpint ye," retorted Terence, "or it's dancin' a jig on yer gory sepulchre I'll be!"

"I'm owing ye wan for last time, Terence, darlint," rejoined Micky, with an ugly sneer. "Sure an' yer roight, an' it's dancin's yer trade, but wid a chain round yer middle attached to a barril organ."

In another moment they were watching each other like two wild animals. To Terence it was not only a matter of life or death; he felt that the whole British Army had a stake in the issue. Moreover, he knew that a renegade and the man who had played him false was again trying to undo him, and the desire for vengeance gave him strength.

Suddenly Nolan, the renegade, cried out so as to attract attention. In another instant Macnamara had pounced upon him like a living fury. For two minutes they fought each other with their fists, but both realised that such a game was only waste of time. They rushed in and grappled. They were fairly well matched, and for two or three minutes swung and spun madly round each other. Now one was in the air and then the other. Each in turn tried to force his enemy backwards by hugging him like a bear until their bones crackled. In the natural order of things, one or other must speedily give way. Neither spoke a word, their agonised gasps for breath alone testified to the intensity of the struggle. Macnamara realised that he was losing strength, and

that he must make one supreme effort to gain the upper hand. He locked his hands behind his enemy's back and drew him to him. He hugged Nolan till the veins stood out on his forehead, and the whites of his eyes turned upwards—pressing him back till both lost their balance and fell to earth, the renegade underneath. And then, ere Macnamara could disengage himself, his

POUNCED UPON HIM LIKE A LIVING FURY.

enemy managed to draw his jack-knife from its sheath, and Terence felt the keen blade glance off the buckle of his belt and rip the leather. It was a near shave.

"Ow, the murtherin' heart av ye! Ow, the black sowl av ye!" gasped Terence.

His fingers closed on his opponent's throat. His fingers were like steel wires; his grip tightened, and in another moment the renegade lay quite still.

Luckily no one had put in an appearance as yet, so, putting his saddle on Nolan's horse, he galloped off eastward in lee of a far-stretching belt of timber. He managed to pass between the Boer outposts unseen. Making a great circle he struck a British Cossack post. To the officer in charge he told his story, with certain reservations, and rode on into the gathering night to warn the advancing column of its danger

Three hours later, as he still swung along, he saw some horsemen loom up out of the misty grey, riding in extended order. There was a flash and a report, and a bullet sang past him.

"Hould on, ye preavious spalpeens!" cried Terence, reining up.

It was the Imperial Light Horse, in advance of the British column. Terence was taken before the general, and immediately afterwards the column advanced, split into two, and occupied two high ridges on each side of the pass. They allowed the unsuspecting Boer commandoes, with their guns, to come well within range, and just as the day-dawn broke they opened a tremendous fire that completely demoralised and annihilated them. Most of the guns and the convoy of the enemy were captured. De Wet to this day occasionally makes himself ill by thinking of what he would do to the man who gave away his plans to the British. If he only knew that it was the sentimental whim of a woman who had sheltered the guilty one in a cellar over which he sat, he would have a fit and die.

That same day the British entered the town, and Terence rejoined his troop. After he had shaved, and put on a clean shirt, he made his way with considerable trepidation to the house of the fair unknown, which had been left intact.

As soon as she saw him she realised the truth; her face became set and as white as death. Terence stood before her in a shamefaced way, stammering some explanation regarding his conduct on the previous day, but the woman cut him short.

"Stop, Irishman," she said, lifting her hand. "I see! You vas one fool, but I vas one still more. Go qvick avay, pefore I kill you—some oazer voman vill do so one day. Mine husbandt——"

"What? Is it married ye are?" interrupted Terence.

"Ya," she replied. "Did I say I vas not? But he ees presonar now. So you go!" She pointed to the open doorway.

And Terence went out through it.

* * * * *

"Macnamara," said the general a little later, as that individual stood before him in his tent, "I believe you've told me the truth as to how you came to be in that house—the madness of the whole affair just fits in with what I know of you. But seeing you did so well afterwards, and considering what has happened, you'll have a sergeant's stripes. If you want to keep them, take my advice and—'ware sun-bonnets!"

John Macha.

"CAPTAIN" COMPETITIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

NOTICE.—At the top of the first page the following particulars must be clearly written, thus:—

Competition No. ——, Class ——, Name ——,
Address ——, Age ——.

Letters to the Editor should not be sent with competitions.

We trust to your honour to send in unaided work.

GIRLS may compete.

You may enter for as many competitions as you like; each "comp." must be sent in a separate envelope, or, when possible, on a post-card.

In every case the Editor's decision is final, and he cannot enter into correspondence with unsuccessful competitors.

Pages should be connected with paper-fasteners; not pins.

Address envelopes and post-cards as follows:—Competition No. ——, Class ——, "THE CAPTAIN," 12, Burleigh Street, Strand, London.

All competitions should reach us by February 12th.

The Results will be published in April.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Only write on one side of each sheet of paper. Only one competition must be put into an envelope. Anybody disregarding these rules, or failing to address envelopes properly, *will be disqualified*.

AGE RULE: A Competitor may enter for (say) an age limit 25 comp., so long as he has not actually turned 26. The same rule applies to all the other age limits.

No. 1.—"**Hidden Books.**"—On one of our advertisement pages you will find twelve pictures. Each picture is intended to describe the title of a well-known book. Readers of THE CAPTAIN should be familiar with all twelve books, or will, at any rate, have heard of them. Write the title of each book under each picture, fill in your name and address, tear the page out, and post to us. No age limit. There will be three prizes, viz., first, £1; second, 10s.; third, 5s.; and twenty consolation prizes consisting of books by CAPTAIN authors. In the event of a number of competitors sending correct titles, the prizes will go to the senders of the most neatly written competitions.

No. 2.—"**Words in Names of Places.**"—Send the names of *six places*, situated in the United Kingdom, out of which you can make the most words. For instance: MANCHESTER—Man, Chester, chest, tan, her, he, set, an, at, hen, etc., etc. ("Manchester" must not be included in the six.) Three prizes of goods selected from our advertisement pages to the value of 7s.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-one.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Twelve.

No. 3.—"**Map of the Mississippi.**"—Show the course of the Mississippi, from source to mouth, putting in towns on its banks, or in its immediate neighbourhood, mountains, states through which it flows, etc. Three prizes of 7s.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-one.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Twelve.

No. 4.—"**Anecdotes of Dogs**" (ORIGINAL).—Send your anecdote in a letter or on a post-card, as you like. Three prizes, consisting of goods to the value of 7s., chosen from our advertisement pages.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-one.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Twelve.

No. 5.—"**My Twelve Favourite Songs.**"—Send a list of these on a post-card. Three "SWAN" FOUNTAIN PENS will be the prizes.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-five.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Twenty.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.

No. 6.—"**Black and White.**"—Send a pen-and-ink drawing of anything you like—humorous or serious. Three prizes of 7s.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-three.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Fourteen.

A CAVALIER MAID.

The Romance of a King's Messenger.

By Clifford Mills.

Illustrated by E. F. Skinner.

Etienne Glanvil, an orphan, grand-daughter of the celebrated French soldier, the Marquis de Latour, is living with distant relations—Sir Geoffrey and Lady Stapleton near Torrington, in Devonshire, when the Parliamentary troops rout the Western Loyalists and drive them towards the Cornish border of Devon. Etienne by chance meets a wounded Cavalier, who is carrying a message from the King to Lord Hopton; owing to circumstances recounted in the opening chapters of the story, it devolves upon her to deliver the King's packet to the Loyalist general. She is suspected of being in possession of the packet by Giles Harrison, a Roundhead officer and suitor for her hand. With the idea of hurrying into Torrington in search of one Stephen Gale, who is favourable to the King, Etienne leaves the Stapletons' house by a secret door only to stumble upon a Roundhead sentinel, who would have detained her but for the intervention of an unknown officer, who proves to be none other than the great Fairfax. Arrived at Torrington, Etienne is so angered by the rejoicings of the crowd at the rout of the Loyalists that she forgets herself, and cries "Shame on ye all, traitors!" Ill would have befallen her had not a huge man carried her into safety at his own house. The man proves to be Stephen Gale. She is suspected of being a traitress by the wounded Cavalier himself, who escapes from the town and makes for the inn at Langtree. To escape the Roundheads and follow to Langtree to deliver to him the letter, she enters a deserted house, where she finds a young gentleman's discarded dress. This she dons and proceeds on her way. When well out of Torrington she falls in with Sir Harry Burgoin, a friend of Lord Fairfax, who recognises the clothes she wears as having belonged to his young brother, recently murdered at Torrington. She denies knowledge of the crime, but will not explain how she came by the clothes. Catching sight of the Cavalier she is seeking, she gallops on, but Sir Harry brings her down with a pistol shot. She proves, however, to be only slightly wounded in the wrist, and after an adventure with Roundheads in a tavern, she journeys on towards Stratton, accompanied by the Cavalier, to whom she has yielded up the precious packet. Deeming her to be the brother of the maid whom he met near Torrington, he greatly embarrasses her by confessing his love for that lady.

CHAPTER XIV.

AT CLOSE QUARTERS.

BUT the more I thought on it, the more conviction grew of the dishonourableness of my further journeying with him in such disguise, moreover as I felt that in robbing him of such a comrade as myself I took naught from the safety of his travelling. So I sought my mind for an excuse that would satisfy him and not represent me in too base a light of coward, and, finding none, went hastily and blunderingly to work.

"Sir," I said bluntly, "I will now take my leave of thee."

But he started as from a dream, and looked at me wonderingly.

"Why, what is this?" he cried. "Have I so injured thy self-love that thou wouldst thus leave me?"

I would trust myself to make no further excuse, but turned my horse, and, like the sulky lad he deemed me, rode off without a word, across the moor; whither, I cared not.

When I took count of things again and looked round I saw through my tears that time, even so soon, had placed a long stretch of dreary moorland betwixt my love and me.

I watched him then till he was lost to view in the dip of the hill, and when I no longer beheld him desolation like a cloud fell around me.

But here I grew angered, and bade myself remember how at sunrise I had left the inn at Torrington, untroubled by this fever. Was ever such madness? Eh, dear! in another I would not have credited it, and much impatience did I feel with myself. Yet, when reason thus censured, my fond heart pleaded: "Nay, never was such a man." And away would my thoughts fly, to dwell with tenderness on his perfections.

But neither the time nor place being suitable for such dreaming, I was forced to consider my journey, which lay in the direction my love had gone.

So, soon, I rode on in so spiritless a fashion that my mare chafed at my mood and, in contempt at my handling, fell into so troublesome a going I was compelled to remember her and prove myself master.

Then, in a better understanding, we went forward, and, leaving the moor behind, I wandered until I met a lad, of whom I, flouting caution,

inquired the way. He directed me, and on I went, down a deep, long lane so enclosed with high banks and strange in its twistings that, had I had more than mine own safety to consider, I would have ridden in much fear; such a sweet trap of Nature's setting was it for poor fugitives. But being so lightly ladened and callous, save for my heart's pain, I rode on in careless unconcern till I came to a stream that ran by a farm below, and, crossing this, was proceeding onwards, when I saw that which made me pull my steed back suddenly, and sent my heart in my mouth in quick fear.

For there on my right was a shed, in which were tethered several horses, and amongst them, his bright eyes lifted at my approach, was the horse of Sir Harry Burgoin, that Brian Carthew had so lately ridden.

I looked up the lane and around, but no one was in sight; then I slid from my mare, and, leading her to a field, fastened her rein to a hedge, and back I crept to the shed.

Yes, there was no mistake; the crest of the antelope on the bridle would have assisted me had memory played me false. And, alas! there was no mistaking the accoutrements of the other steeds; my love had been taken prisoner by the Roundheads, and the King's letter—what of that?

Trembling with apprehension, I leant back in the dark shed, where I stood for a moment watching the rain falling, with my heart full of sorrow. Alack! it was hard that this should be the end, and these traitors win after all. Win! As I thought on it, there arose in my heart that strange exaltation that had possessed me when first I had carried the King's letter.

I stepped out from the shed, and, looking around me cautiously, crept to the wall beyond that encircled three sides of the farm. Keeping under its shelter, I at length came to the front of the house, and, from behind a garden hedge there, I searched each window with hungry gaze.

But a jingle of chain startled me, and there to the right of me was a Roundhead trooper. In the midst of a heavy yawn was he when I caught sight of him, and impatient was the look he cast towards the farm as he turned his horse and with no little noise rode towards the outer gate, thus giving me chance to slip across the sward to the house.

Reaching this ere he was again in sight, I crept under shelter of the deep porch to the window furthest from the roadway.

But not a moment had I knelt beneath it than through the lattice came the sound of a woman weeping.

"Alack!" she cried, "how hard is this! Six soldiers upon us, and I am run off my legs to provide. Alack! but these cruel wars will beggar the lot of us. Oh! why went my man to Holsworthy this day?"

Here, grief abandoned, she hung her head through the casement, and, seeing me beneath, screamed out at the sight.

But cautioning her to silence I shook my purse before her eyes. "See," whispered I, "if thou wilt give me safe hiding from those within, I will wager thou art not the loser."

The sight of the gold which I displayed stayed her tears. She leant further towards me.

"You are for the King, sir?" she whispered, "but no matter. Run round to the left and wait at the door thou wilt find there."

I wanted no second bidding, but, though I speedily found the door she had mentioned, I waited there full five fearsome minutes ere she opened it and cautiously beckoned me within.

"Quick," she cried, breathless, "they are going! They asked for cider, but I have fooled them and said there was none in the place."

But I caught her arm. "Let them not go," I cried, "if thou wouldst see gold of mine. Run! run! Say thou wilt bring the wine, and that right speedily." Then, as she lingered: "Go!" I exclaimed, stamping my foot in sheer desperation.

She looked at me in amaze and hesitated, but the gold I chinked in my hand decided her, and she hurried down the narrow passage, and I heard her high voice explaining matters in the room beyond.

She was soon at my side again.

"They will wait," she said, "for they are spent with travel, but," and she pulled me into the kitchen, "they have a prisoner amongst them; is it he you are after?"

I nodded my head.

"I must speak to him, though I die for it," I said. "Canst thou not devise some method?" And I turned upon her beseechingly.

"Why," she muttered sulkily, "what you ask is not possible. He sits alone in the window, truly, but six are between him and the door."

"Nay, but thou couldst speak to him perchance whilst the others refresh themselves with the wine. Think!" cried I. "Never hadst thou such a chance of making gold by thy wit." And I tossed my purse meaningly.

Alas! greed was in her gaze, but nothing more, and I sat hopeless. But the next moment I sprang to my feet and clapped my hands.

"Quick!" I cried, "for I will take in the wine myself. Oh! these Roundheads, how we will yet cozen them. Oh! my love!"

She thought me mad; and small wonder.

"You," she exclaimed; "they will take thee also."

But I caught her and kissed her where she stood.

"Dear soul!" I said, "am I so old a youth that a woman's garb would not disguise me? See," I cried, "so much for the loan of thy Sunday gauds for a few moments."

"Oh!" she said, as she gasped at the guineas and looked in my face by turns, and then, smiling, fled from the room; where I waited in much trepidation, scarce daring to think on what I was about. But oh! how my heart rose to hoodwink these rebels, and look once more on the face of my love.

When I turned there was the woman with an armful of gauds. Dear heart! she opened her eyes to see a youth so nimble in the donning of them. For I stayed not but to remove my cape and hat, and the doublet beneath so filled her best attire that none could have cavilled at its fit.

Ah! but my heart beat fast when, following her with jug and tankards, the door opened, and I found myself confronted by none other than the ferret-eyed cornet, who had strode in upon us at the "Green Dragon Inn."

"Now," he exclaimed, as he caught sight of me behind, "shall we be helped betimes!"

But I turned from him as we had planned, leaving the woman to serve him, and busied myself with the troopers beyond. Their rude jests at my expense dyed my cheeks with confusion; yet was I glad, since it showed me I was unsuspected, and I filled their tankards with so full a measure that they vowed a better-hearted wench had not served them since they had come to the crabbed west.

Through it all their prisoner never moved. His gaze was turned to the lattice and his face was stern and troubled. As I looked upon him sitting there alone, a prisoner, such a sudden rush of tenderness filled my heart that for a second I dare not trust my voice to speak, lest the tone of it should betray me.

The woman, anxious to win the gold I had promised if I attained my purpose, had now caught the attention of the rest, with whom she talked and made merry.

"Sir," I said, standing before him where he sat in the window-sill; "sir, wilt thou not drink also?"

But his thoughts were away, so I touched his shoulder, whereupon he started and, half looking up, thanked me, and turned again. Then I knew it was live or die to our undertaking.

"Sir," I cried, bending and speaking low, "wilt thou not drink to the success of Godfrey Glanvil and the message he will carry to Stratton for thee—if thou preferest?"

Then, as I spoke, raising his quick glance to mine, he knew me; and oh, my love! I saw the good hope fly to his eyes, and, as he looked down on me, his lips tremble. Perchance of the two I was the calmer as, amidst the noisy laughter of the rest, I filled his tankard.

'Twas but a moment ere he set it down again, and yet, in that short time, my fingers had closed once more upon the King's letter.

"Go," said he in a whisper, "and Heaven bless thee for a true lad, Godfrey Glanvil!"

But though I yearned to do his bidding, I was not to go so easily; for a rough fellow caught my wrist, and, dodging his officer's eye, strove to salute me, whereupon I, angered, and burning to be gone, threw the rest of the cider into his leering face, much to his discomfort and the others' amusement, for they all hailed my exit from the room with loud laughter.

Outside in the kitchen the woman joined me, mightily pleased with the success of our plan.

"Never have I seen the like," she laughed. "Thou hast the very turn of a woman, and make no ill-looking a maid. Eh, dear life, what my master will say when I tell him!"

I paid her to her heart's content, beseeching her to keep the troopers, if possible, engaged some minutes longer, whilst I got forward on my journey; and then, by the way I had come, I crept back again; and, seeking the field, found my true little mare nibbling the grass on the bank. I was so overjoyed at her faithfulness that I bent and kissed her pretty sleek neck, and, leading her by a way the woman had told me, found myself above the farm, on a wild, broad moor, of which, as far as I could see, I was the sole wayfarer, and across which I was soon going forward, as fast as my good steed could carry me.

In truth, I would not trust myself e'en to think of my love left behind, but gathered courage for my journey in the thought of the content that had shone in his eyes when he blessed me. Perchance some of the spirit of the madcap wind that was chasing the soft grey rain possessed me, for fatigue I felt none, and oh! how my heart leapt to think how we had managed to cozen those rebels once more.

Yet, some distance on, I reined my horse in sudden fear, for behind me came the sound of shot, or else my fancy played me false.

Waiting a moment, I listened. In truth, it seemed there was danger in my further journeying in so open a place, and, turning from it, I sought the road beyond.

CHAPTER XV.

ON FOR THE KING!

HAD I been wiser than the simple maid I was, I had thought more of the dangers I ran by so riding straight forward, and would not, as I did, have thereby saved my mare many a mile.

But as it was, made daring by the strange

"SIR, . . . WILT THOU NOT DRINK TO THE SUCCESS OF GODFREY GLANVIL?"

elation that filled my breast, and feeling that success, which so far had been mine, would not desert me in the end, I rode on boldly, asking questions of country folk when I needed with an effrontery that disarmed them of suspicion.

Coming to a steep hill, I saw below me a silver river, winding through the valley. Dear heart, it was the Tamar at last! A village lay on its banks, but to this I could not trust myself, but passing into the open country I went on, and further down the stream found a ford, by which I crossed.

But I had not ridden so much as a dozen yards in fair Cornwall, when I found how fickle a mistress is Fortune. Lame went my mare, with a hind shoe that dragged, and my journey was stayed beyond help. I got off to examine it, but found, as I feared, it was work for the smith alone. It was true the village was on each side of the stream, but much did I deplore taking the precious missive I carried into the dangers that might lurk therein.

But, alas, already were the afternoon shadows falling, and who could tell if this night would not see the King's army journeying further west,

or, worse, maybe assembling to give battle to their enemies.

There was nothing for it but to brave the venture and trust to the Providence that had hitherto sustained me. So across the fields I went, and, gaining the outskirts of the village, inquired for the man I sought. Finding him, I saw to my dismay that he was already engaged in shoeing one horse, and that another in the shed waited his attention.

For some moments I stood at the entrance of the shop looking on with impatience, but, fearing my almost uncontrollable anxiety to be away might betray me, I sought the inn a short way up the street, where I procured some refreshment, being, I now found, much in need of such.

A pretty maid served me, with so kind an attention I could but marvel, till I recalled my disguise. She told be that the Lord Hopton was said to be still at Stratton, whither all who were faithful to the King were hastening. Here she looked at me and sighed, and added there was much to be said for both sides; and for her part she cared not, if a man were proper to look upon and had a civil tongue, which he followed.

"And of the truth of this you can guess, for there are two of the other side in the room beyond, yet do I attend your honour," she whispered, blushing, her cheek at my shoulder.

Despite my caution I started at her words, which she seeing stood with her head on one side observing me, then, beckoning me to follow, she stole on tip-toe to the passage. Here, through a half-open door, we looked into the tap-room beyond, where I beheld a couple of Roundhead troopers smoking in front of the fire.

"They do but await their horses from the smithy to join the rest of their party, who are patrolling the town here," she whispered.

And sure enough at that moment there arrived in front of the inn, not only their steeds but mine own also, which the lazy smith's lad, to save himself an extra journey, had brought at the same time.

It was the quickest maid in all the world whose hand I had caught in my fear, for ere I spoke she divined my difficulty.

"Go," she cried, as they within the tap-room beyond rose at the clatter without, "a yard in advance often wins the mile."

And go I did, terror assisting haste, heedless that the lad cried out for payment or that the two Roundheads standing at the inn's entrance added their voices to the hue and cry that followed my going up the street.

I vowed as I rode up the hill beyond, which the traitors had not so much as rounded, that there was more loyalty in the hoofs of my mare, than was now to be found in half Devon. And in truth the dear creature seemed to understand when I cried to her softly:—

"On sweetheart, on, for we ride for the King!"

With many a backward glance I rode, but so swift was my steed that, after a time, I doubted me not I had defied pursuit. So I checked my little mare's speed, being anxious not to intrude too much on her willingness, and, having asked my way at a cottage, rode on by a narrow horse track through the most desolate country I e'er had seen. Across the yellow moorland, that on all sides surrounded me, a cold breeze blew, and from many a clump of trees as I passed came the mournful hoot of the owl as the grim night bird hailed the setting sun, which on my left was travelling to rest by a pathway of watery clouds.

It was in truth a drear land for a maid to travel at sunset, but each yard I went was taking me nearer the goal I sought, and on I went by hill and vale till at last on the wind came the boom of the sea.

Dear heart! As I heard it, I rose in my stirrups and cried out in sudden joy. For there, but a few miles away, rose a rugged headland, enclosing a fair, wide bay, upon the rocky shore of which the great, white-crested waves rolled and broke in clouds of foam.

The dear, dear sea! A sob came to my throat at the sight of it; so true a friend it seemed, assuring my anxious heart by its presence of the speedy ending of my journey.

Alas! my rapture was short-lived! A sound startled me, and, looking round, I caught sight of a party of horsemen who, coming at full speed up a road to my right, threatened to reach the cross-roads before me.

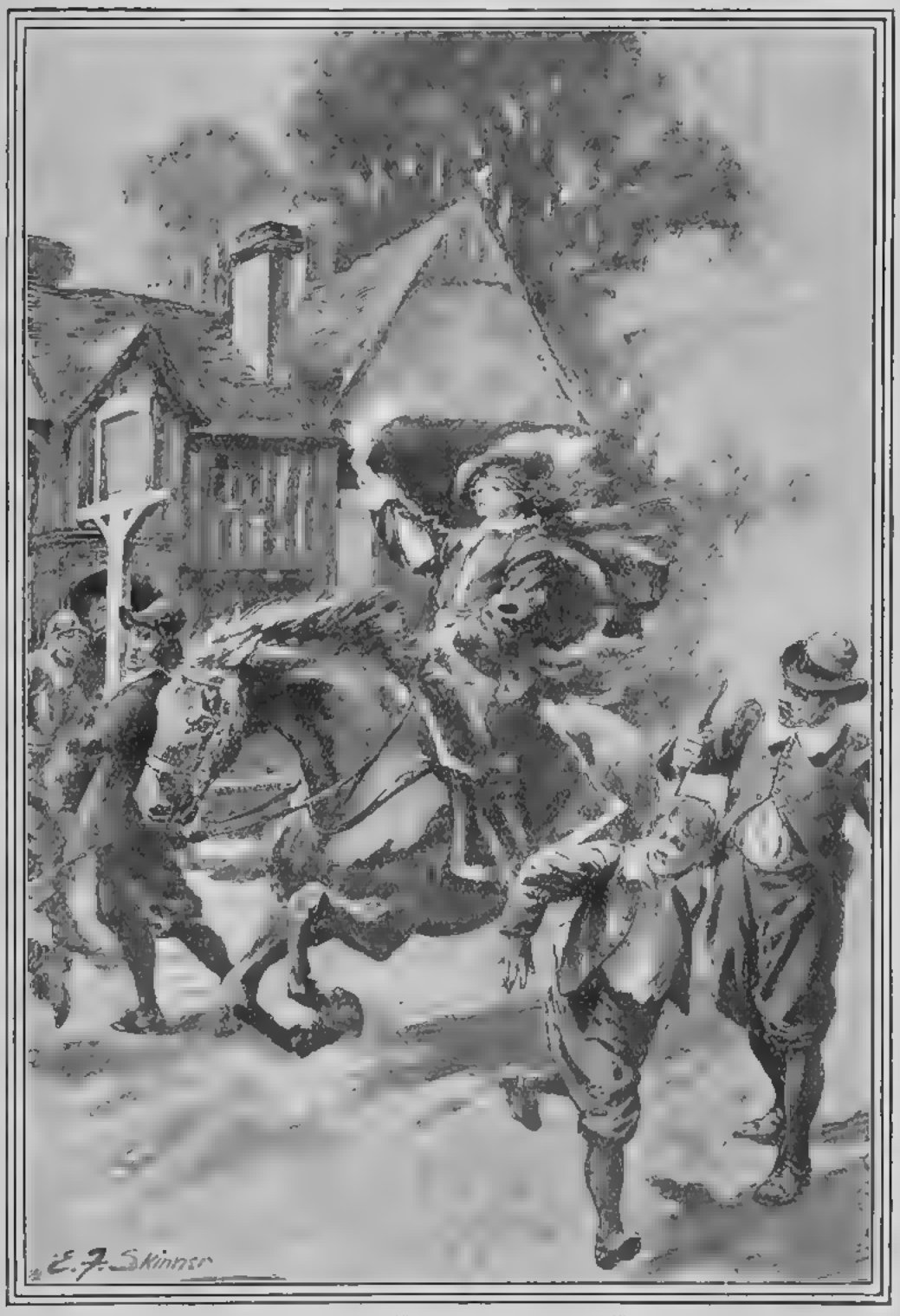
I uttered a cry of dismay as I saw this, and then, urging my mare, I rode forward. I heard them behind shout, and on they came, but, dear heart! I was first to reach the turn, and away down the hill I went; losing sight of the sea, and on and away with them at my heels, for full two miles and more, till down in a deep, deep valley I looked on a clustering, fair, white town, and knew that my journey was ended.

At the outskirts an outpost called on me to stop, but the fear of those behind was upon me. Plucking the packet from my coat I held it aloft.

"For the King!" I cried. "For the King!"

And they that walked stepped from my path as I rode, my curls on the wind, my heart nigh to burst, and a sound like the sea itself in my ears.

But as I neared the stream and caught sight of that dear sacred hill of Stamford rising ahead, the nearest of my pursuers gained upon me.



"FOR THE KING!" I CRIED, "FOR THE KING!"

"Lad," he cried, "good lad—perdition take thee!—but thou canst ride!"

Dear heart! it was my love that spoke, and his hand that caught my reins and pulled my horse to a standstill, in front of a group of Cavaliers, who had stood watching our approach, below in the bend of the lane.

CHAPTER XVI.

AT THE "TREE INN."

FOR the moment intense surprise held me spellbound. Meantime, the party of Cavaliers who had rescued Sir Brian had now joined us. These drawing rein, one and all saluted a dignified Cavalier, who stood foremost of the group in front of us.

He returned their salutations, his eyes upon me, who, mannerless and mute, sat on my horse, still holding the packet on high.

"Doff thy hat, lad," cried my love in my ear. "'Tis the Lord Hopton."

But at his words I turned so white a face upon him that he sprang from his horse with a cry.

"My lord," he said, "the boy doth swoon with fatigue, and no marvel, for he has done no ill day's journey, to ride through the enemy's lines to bring this safely to hand."

And he stooped to pick up the packet that, slipping from my nerveless fingers, fell fluttering to the ground.

Dizzy and faint, I sat on my horse like one in a dream, and heard the cheer go up from those around, as Sir Brian Carthew presented the letter that, after so many perils, now found its way safely into the hands of his chief.

But though several pressed forward to assist me, it was Sir Brian Carthew who led my horse, and stayed my courage by brave words to endure, as we followed the rest to the inn up the hill.

But ere we gained it the story flew, as news will, and from each door and up the stony street the people thronged to see the youth who had ridden so fast for the King.

Ah me! had they known how troubled a girl's heart beat 'neath the lad's doublet of him they watched, what surprise had they.

For though, as yet, I was too sick to realise all, I felt never was maiden in worse perplexity; and how fervent was the prayer I breathed that Heaven would aid me to keep my secret, so that presently I might steal from them all and seek my nurse, within whose sheltering arms I longed to hide my maiden sorrow!

So thinking, I whispered my heart to endure, and entered the inn with Sir Brian Carthew. But here at my entrance was I met with such a cheering and waving of plumed hats as well-nigh overcame me, so many thronging forward, with kindly word, to shake my hand, that again mine eyes sought my love's in despair. I think my glance puzzled him, but he smiled, and, turning, besought the rest to desist till I had had time to recover somewhat. Here was he summoned to my Lord Hopton, who, standing at the window, was perusing by the fast fading light the message from the King.

Following his going with my gaze I saw the general, after a short and eager converse, lead him towards a group at the further end of the room, the centre of which was a distinguished-looking old man, who from his soldierly and haughty bearing I adjudged to be an officer of great importance. Taller was he by half a head than any near him, and the perfect taste and simplicity displayed in his sombre yet rich attire, set off the elegance of his figure which, still erect and dignified, belied the age his snow-white locks imputed.

His proud, keen glance falling upon me as he talked to the rest, set me marvelling as to where I had seen the like, for in truth it seemed I had met it before.

The other Cavaliers, with kind consideration, had left me in quietness, and thankful was I for the space to collect my thoughts and still my heart's deep throbbings.

Sitting thus apart I watched them all. In truth it was a goodly company in which I found myself. For here at the "Tree Inn" at Stratton had the truest and bravest in the land rallied themselves around as heroic and stainless a chieftain as ever drew sword for a King.

Though it was true their laces were tarnished, and the plumes in their beavers bedraggled, they wore all with the distinguished elegance that would have graced a royal festival.

But two short nights ago had I, with bursting heart, crept to my chamber at Stapleton, and strove in vain to shut from my ears the shameful exultation of the traitors. And now, here was I in so quick a time surrounded by honourable gentlemen; and on each side did I hear such protestations of love for the King and devotion to his cause as brought me new strength and the colour to my cheek more speedily than the wine they had set before me.

Running down the centre of the long, low room was a table spread from end to end with all the best the inn could furnish. And, as the serving men hurried to and fro bringing in viands, the Cavaliers in little groups about the room talked and laughed in the gloaming.

Ah dear! the content it was to hear the like after my sad years of exile with the enemy. I felt I had liked to die then and there, so dreary looked the future, apart from all that from my childhood I had learnt to esteem.

Then in a twinkling it seemed to me, while I thus sadly pondered, did they gather about the board; and as I watched shyly from the shadows where I sat, marvelling how best I could slip away unseen, did two come forward and lifting me, chair and all, carry me, amidst much merriment and cheering, to the table, where they set me down, dear heart! at the side of their chief himself.

So it was that, despite protestations, I found myself a most honoured guest at that table, around which were gathered some of the noblest hearts left to His Majesty.

But alack! with what reluctance, with what unutterable shame did I sit there. Little did they guess how cruel was the honour they bestowed upon me, nor how thankful would I have been for cold neglect so that I had been permitted to go unquestioned.

Yet the very longing I had not to be discovered upheld me to endure. And though the food I forced myself to eat half choked me, and each commendation of the courteous Lord Hopton cut through my heart like a knife, I sat there to all appearances the shy youth they thought me.

Hardest of all to bear was the relation of my venture by Sir Brian Carthew, who, at my Lord Hopton's request, told of my ride and the methods whereby I had saved the King's letter from the rebels.

Dear heart! As he spoke, how the eyes of those around the table flashed upon me, as each to the other vowed no braver youth had lived, nor better trick been played the cunning Roundheads!

The kind Lord Hopton, noting at length the embarrassment I strove so hard to conceal, refrained from further questioning me, and devoted himself to the stately old officer with white hair who occupied the seat at his right hand.

Together, I observed, they conversed in French, I adjudged for better caution, as the servitors still thronged the room. And through it all I sat as one in a dream, watching the gallant throng, and anon, when I dared, stealing a glance at the noble face of Sir Brian Carthew, who sat opposite, deep in converse with Sir John Digby, the brave leader of horse who had so gallantly contested the fight at Torrington, and who now spoke of the morrow and the expediency of pressing westwards, since retreat and not battle was to be the method with the rebels until the landing of the French allies.

But the longest hour must come to an end, and so it befell that our meal drew to a close, and standing we drank the King's health, and I dared to hope my penance over.

But before we had time to reseat ourselves the stately stranger at Lord Hopton's side spoke.

"Pardon me, Messieurs," he said in broken English, "if I now propose the health of Monsieur here, the brave youth whose gallant conduct has stirred my old heart to admiration and recalled to my memory those days long past, when, encouraged by the glorious example of their leader, the great Henry of Navarre, the gentlemen of France found also pleasure in such deeds of daring loyalty.

"Monsieur," he cried, turning to me, who, shrinking, strove to evade his gaze, "Monsieur, permit my congratulations; and take from the lips of an old soldier this truth, that no greater tie can bind England to the heart of France than such bravery displayed by England's sons. Monsieur, your name—that we may pledge you."

Looking up, my cheeks burning with shame, I found the eyes of all upon me. Kindly, encouragingly, aye, tenderly they regarded me—these brave, true men I was thus so basely deceiving. My love, leaning a little forward, kindest of all, his face lit with pleasure at the honour done his comrade, waited like the rest, tankard in hand.

"Come," said he, "come, Godfrey."

Then, with a gasp, I told the lie.

"Godfrey Glanvil," I said, "is my name."

But here the old Frenchman's eyes, deep, piercing, intense, dwelt on my face, so that I dare not so much as drop mine from his gaze, for they seemed to read my heart, and the deceit that dwelt there. White grew I to the lips as he looked upon me, my tankard shaking in my trembling hand. Alas! thus, despite myself, did guilt cry out upon me.

Then did my love, thinking to help, explain that I was Godfrey Glanvil, son of that noted Cavalier who fell at Stratton fight two years ago, and, speaking so, smiled encouragement upon me, whom he thus unwittingly betrayed.

For no sooner did the Frenchman hear these words than he cried out sharply:—

"Godfrey Glanvil? Pardon me, Monsieur, but here is some mistake; no son had this same Godfrey Glanvil—on my word do I give this, gentlemen, on the word of the Marquis de Latour."

Frozen with despair of the moment, I looked into his eyes, and knew him for no other than the great Latour.

When I realised this, all hope I had of keeping my secret left me. Under the pitiless scrutiny of his gaze I grew faint with sheer horror.

"Come!" said he—alas! how like cut of steel was his tone! "Trifle not thus, monsieur, with an old man. So brave a deed requires no *nom de guerre*."

And here those at the table, witnessing my confusion, cried out that he was right, and bade me speak. But silent I stood, a statue of despair.

Into Latour's face I looked with such poor dignity as I could muster.

"Alas, sir!" I said, "I am that unhappy lady, whose loyalty, perchance, hath outstepped conventionality—who, when all around were traitors, did thus dare to serve the King."

Thus far I spoke, and then shame like a torrent broke through the barrier of my poor pride

"WHO ART THOU, THEN, YOUNG SIR, WHO HAST THUS RIDDEN FOR THE KING?"

Then did Latour lose patience.

"Wilt thou by thy silence twit me as a liar?" he cried. "Did I not know, I, her grandfather, that one daughter and that only had this Godfrey Glanvil? Who art thou, then, young sir, who hast thus ridden for the King?"

Casting one piteous glance around me, to find on each face interest replaced by cold suspicion, desperation born of despair seized me.

and down I sank in my chair sobbing, my head on the table to hide me from their gaze.

I think in all the world naught more terrible could have been than the silence which followed. So deep it was, so full, intense, it stayed the wild sobs which first did strangle me, and impelled me at length to look up.

Dear heart! they stood around, with downcast glance, before me, every man bareheaded now,

where a moment before each had worn his beaver. But the face of my love, upon which my despairing glance rested—ah! would that I had died before I had seen how changed it was; how white and stern the features turned aside from me!

Oh! I knew, I knew—of what he was thinking, how so basely I had cheated him of his heart's secret; with what unmaidenliness had I done all. Thinking thus, such an anguish seized me, that I sprang to my feet in despair.

"Oh! if ye have hearts," I cried, "let me away at once, for each moment here is cruellest torture, lest in your minds ye read me not aright."

Then, as I moved to go, a dozen sprang to open the door, and bowed low as I passed, but, alas! my love was not of that number, and I went out sobbing.

CHAPTER XVII.

LATOUR.

BUT I went not far alone. For before I gained the street someone overtook me, and there at my side, a commanding figure in the twilight, stood Latour.

But I, forgetting all but shame at my intolerable position, confronted him without fear.

"Could I do otherwise?" I cried, in his own tongue. "It was for the King, thou mindest—for the King, Latour. Thou wouldst thyself have done the like."

And in a passion of tears I stood before him.

"'Tis true," he answered, his stern voice broken, "thou sayest rightly, I should have done the like. Ah, *mon enfant*," he cried, "'tis that which bespeaks thee grandchild of Latour."

He held out his arms as he spoke, and, with a sob, I fled to the security of his embrace. Here for some moments I lay, appalled by the excess of the deep emotion that shook his stately form. Then I raised my head.

"Ah, *mon grandpère*," I implored, "if thou hast pity for my shame take me to some spot in this big world where never I may see the eyes of any one of those within."

"But, my child——" he protested tenderly.

Then, as sounds came from within:—

"Quick!" I cried. "Hide me, oh, hide me?"

With the utternost tenderness he comforted my fears; then, taking from his shoulders his own dark mantle, he threw it round me, and, so clad and clinging to his arm, we went out into the starlit street.

As we walked down its hilly length, ever and anon did he press my hand that trembled on his arm. "Courage, my child," he whispered. "Have no fear—thou art with Latour."

Thus did I, in such a life-storm, find kindly haven in the heart of the grandfather who had for so long disowned me.

That night we rested at an inn at the base of the hill. And nought could exceed the tenderness of my grandfather, who, with marvellous consideration, saved me from all embarrassment so that none knew of the boy's attire I wore beneath my clinging mantle.

But alas! sleep came not near mine eyelids the livelong night, and the morning found me in so high a fever from fatigue and distress, that there was no thought of our going onward.

All the morn I tossed in weariness, in such a torment of thought, and with so aching a heart, 'twas all I could do to force a smile to ease the troubled face of Latour when he came to the door of my chamber. He went away comforted with the knowledge that my old nurse lived not far distant; and I lay listening to the noise in the street below. Noise of the clatter of horse and the shouting of men. Alas! I knew it was the King's army retreating westward, and, knowing, wept for my love, who went with them; my love, whose face I felt I should see no more.

Lying thus, I pictured them all, that gallant throng of last night riding forth booted and spurred, their brave faces stern beneath their drooping beavers. Would they, oh! cruel thought! speak lightly of her who had left them in such maiden misery but yesternight?

Oh! the weary day; how drearily the rain fell amongst the branches of the apple tree that tapped my window with every gust of the noisy west wind!

So I fretted sleepless, till, when the evening shadows were falling, came a step on the stairs that stayed my heart's beating, and there was my dear old nurse at the foot of my bed.

"Oh, child!" she said, as I sprang to her, "stay this wild weeping, dear heart! Wouldst kill thyself?"

"Nanette," I whispered that night when all the world was sleeping and I had told her my story, "did ever, ever a gentlewoman so forget herself?"

"Why, my bird," she reproached tenderly, her arms round me, "is it indeed thy father's daughter who thus doth cavil at work for the King?"

And with such sweet comfort I at last slept.

Yet, with all their care, 'twas full a week ere they deemed me recovered sufficiently to be moved from the inn. And even then we left in

strictest secrecy, for a reason that in my sickness I had not dreamed.

This being that, by thus remaining at Stratton, Latour had cut himself off from the King's army, now at Bodmin; the rebels having by this time established themselves between us and that town.

When I knew this, and realised how grave was the danger the great Latour, staunch loyalist and partisan of our Queen, ran of being taken prisoner by these insolent rebels, naught could exceed my distress at being the cause of his peril.

But my grandfather, his proud eyes flashing, laughed at my fears.

"Console thyself, *ma mie*," he said; "these English traitors will at least find their match in Latour."

So it came that we went not far from Stratton, but took up our abode in a house that a trusty relative of my nurse procured for us. Built on the side of the hill, in the midst of an old garden surrounded by high walls, it gave promise of security and rest, if these, alas, could now be found in England.

From the hill behind our little house my grandfather pointed out to me the cliffs, and bade me listen to the far-off sound of the sea.

"Beyond is a bay, I am told," he said, his keen glance searching the coast line, "where at full tide at times one may embark. Who knows," he mused, "that such may not mean safety to us if events run ill?"

Ah dear! Oft did I climb that wooded hill, which, as the days passed, grew all golden sweet with clustering primroses, and sit me there to look with heartsick gaze, not seawards, but towards that fair town of Stratton, where last I had set eyes upon my love.

Ah me! Brian Carthew, first in the fight I knew wert thou, and perchance already dead for thy King, but in truth, wherever thou wert, thou didst carry my heart with thee, even peradventure to the dim shadowland of Death itself.

Save for this sorrow of mine, which none might share, the days were happy. For each hour I spent in his company increased the respect and love I felt for my grandfather, the noble Latour. Ah! what a man was he! And when at nightfall Nanette would bring the lamp into our sitting-room, and, closing the shutters, leave us together, I would sit at the feet of Latour, and listen to the tales he told.

Such tales of bravest deeds, of hair-breadth escapes, and ever the King foremost, and, close to his heels, Latour.

Sometimes I vowed that, in this or that, Latour himself had carried the palm, but he would hush such words as sacrilege.

"Nay, the King, child," he would say. "Ah, couldst thou have seen my King!"

And his keen eyes would grow misty with the hallowed remembrance of his youth's idol.

Sometimes he would tell me of the little King Louis, and praise his great comeliness, and wonder if he would one day follow in the steps of his glorious grandsire.

"But nay, I think not," he would sigh; "the world will not see two Henris of Navarre."

Then he would check his sad thoughts, and his proud glance would kindle as he told of the honour and power of his position in France, and how that none were more welcomed at court by the stately Spanish Queen-mother than he, the old warrior.

"Ah, my child," he would say, "thou wilt confess when thou dost see thy home, the Chateau de Latour, that no fairer place exists."

From him I learnt that his mission to England had been twofold — he having brought letters from our Queen to the Prince of Wales, then in Truro, with the hope, on the completion of this business, of seeking me out, if the warlike state of the country would permit him. And it was in journeying for the latter purpose that he had met the King's army at Stratton, where he had become the guest of the courteous Lord Hopton.

"Little did I think," he said, his eyes sparkling, "to find thee in that brave youth; though at sight of him, it is true, my old heart leapt."

But I cried out in pain, imploring him never, never to speak of that wild ride of mine.

"Ah, but," he exclaimed, a twinkle in his eye that I found hard to forgive, "must I for ever forget, mademoiselle, that pretty grandson of mine, whose brave deed I found so adorable?"

"For ever, for ever, monsieur," I cried, my hand on his mouth to stay him.

"Now what can a poor man do," he laughed, "with such a despot of a grandchild?"

So did we grow fast friends, Latour and I, but one barrier was there that stayed my love's free tide, and this, that of my parents he never spoke.

From my kin at Stapleton no news had come, but in truth this was not to be marvelled at, seeing the secrecy in which we lived and the object we had for not being discovered. But I doubted not that news of my escapement from Torrington, and the method thereof, had by this time reached them.

Neither had I heard aught of Sir Harry Burgoin, and much did I harass myself at the thought that, should he need my testimony, he would find difficulty in discovering my whereabouts. Nevertheless, remembering his words I had carefully laid by the clothes in which I had ridden from Torrington.

"Preserve them, Nanette," I said, "for we may yet have to give account of them."

On a wild morning in March I walked with Latour down a deep lane all bowered o'er with nodding catkins. Above our heads and about our path blew last summer's faded leaves from oak and beech, caught by the boisterous wind.

Latour, deep in thought, walked at my side, and, as he heeded not my chatter, I fell to silence also, and away as ever flew my thoughts to that little army westward, of the doings of which we heard such meagre tidings, and those by stealth.

But this morn a message had come to my grandfather, which he had perused with grave countenance, and, though I had well-nigh died to learn the purport, I had refrained from question, lest from my eagerness he should dream aught of the secret of my heart.

But presently he spoke.

"So it is all over," he said, "this great struggle. Ah! a strange people are your English, Mademoiselle Etienne."

"But what?" I cried with a white face.

"It appears," said he, "these English make but poor courtiers, and the King has lost, Milord Hopton is to be forced to sign a treaty, and the war here is over."

But I caught his arm.

"Ah! *mon grandpère*," I cried, "what of the allies from France?—when they come will not the King teach these rebels a lesson?"

"Dear child!" he answered sadly, "the hearts that would once have readily righted the wrongs of the favourite child of Henri of Navarre are dead in their graves—or, worse, have wittingly lost remembrance."

Here he mused, while I hung on his face with my gaze.

"Mazarin hath played with our poor Princess, as he hath done with many," he murmured. "Much do I doubt if he had ever least intent of fulfilling this promise of sending help to England's King."

Then, as I cried out in anguish, his eye dwelt on my troubled face.

"Petite," he said proudly, "grieve not—for thee at least this news brings naught but happiest fortune. It means our exile in this drear isle is over, and that I may in freedom return to Paris, and take with me my Mademoiselle de Latour, for so, *ma mie*, I have the King's permission to call thee. Ah! my belle," he cried, as he looked upon me standing at his side, "is it possible I once deplored that thou wert not a boy? Ah! what a fool hast thou been, thou poor Latour!"

As he spoke, his grand head erect, his eyes flashing pride and pleasure upon me, a strange pain awoke in my heart. This drear isle, land of exile to him, was home to me—English child of an English sire—for all I was grandchild of the great Latour. England! Had I grown in this dear, sea-girt land that had sheltered me from babyhood when Latour had disowned me, to be thus transplanted without pain or regret?

Oh, yes! I had love for Latour, and admiration and deepest respect, but I was my father's child, daughter of this dear England—land of sea and the wild rose.

Looking at my face, my grandfather read there sorrow where he had thought to find but exultation.

"Why, what is this, Mademoiselle?" he cried sharply.

But I looked up into his face. I had done my birth discredit to have quibbled here.

"Monsieur, *mon grandpère*," I said, and trembled as I spoke, for it was an untoward thing to say to an elder, "does your King Louis count himself less French because his mother is daughter of Spain?"

He saw my meaning and as quickly resented it. No longer the indulgent grandfather but the haughty Latour, he stood before me.

"Pardon me," he said icily. "Have I too much honoured a saucy child?"

"Alas, my grandfather," I pleaded, "hast thou not yet forgiven my sweet mother that she loved the truest, best of men in all the world?" And there, in the lane, I fell on my knees before him and caught his mantle, importuning him.

But he shook me off, his eyes blazing with anger, and turned and strode down the lane in wrath terrible to witness.

Left thus, I ran on sobbing, scarce knowing what I did, feeling in my heart I had meant aright.

In a hollow at the foot of the hill I gained below, I threw myself down on a bank with intent to calm myself. But I had not more than recovered breath, when a sound startled me, and, glancing up, I saw a man clambering through the hedge on the high bank above.

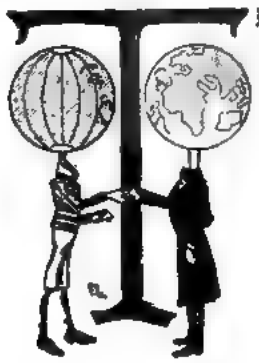
Startled, I sprang to my feet, and as I did so his hat, caught by the branches as he pushed through them, fell into the roadway below, and I looked upon the face of the same spy who had chased me on the banks of the Torridge!

For a moment I stood spellbound by fear, then, with a scream, I turned and fled up the road, whither Latour had disappeared, crying his name aloud in my terror.

(To be concluded.)

THE BABE AND THE DRAGON.

By P. G. Wodehouse. Illustrated by T. M. R. Whitwell.



THE annual inter-house football cup at St. Austin's lay between Dacre's, who were the holders, and Merevale's, who had been runners-up in the previous year, and had won it altogether three times out of the last five. The cup was something of a tradition in Merevale's, but of late Dacre's had become serious rivals, and, as has been said before, were the present holders.

This year there was not much to choose between the two teams. Dacre's had three of the first fifteen and two of the second; Merevale's two of the first and four of the second. St. Austin's being not altogether a boarding-school, many of the brightest stars of the teams were day-boys, and there was, of course, always the chance that one of these would suddenly see the folly of his ways, reform, and become a member of a house.

This frequently happened, and this year it was almost certain to happen again, for no less a celebrity than MacArthur, commonly known as the Babe, had been heard to state that he was negotiating with his parents to that end. Which house he would go to was at present uncertain. He did not know himself, but it would, he said, probably be one of the two favourites for the cup. This lent an added interest to the competition, for the presence of the Babe would almost certainly turn the scale. The Babe's nationality was Scotch, and, like most Scotchmen, he could play football more than a little. He was the safest, coolest centre three-quarters the school had, or had had for some time. He shone in all branches of the game, but especially in tackling. To see the Babe spring apparently from nowhere, in the middle of an inter-school match, and bring down with violence a man who had passed the back, was an intellectual treat. Both Dacre's and Merevale's, therefore, yearned for his advent exceedingly. The reasons which finally decided his choice were rather curious. They arose in the following manner:—

The Babe's sister was at Girton. A certain Miss Florence Beezley was also at Girton. When the Babe's sister re-visited the ancestral home at the end of the term, she brought Miss Beezley with her to spend a week. What she saw in Miss Beezley was to the Babe a matter for wonder, but she must have liked her, or she would not have gone out of her way to seek her company. Be that as it may, the Babe would have gone a very long way out of his way to avoid her company. He led a fine, healthy, out-of-doors life during that week, and doubtless did himself a lot of good. But times will occur when it is imperative that a man shall be under the family roof. Meal-times, for instance. The Babe could not subsist without food, and he was obliged, Miss Beezley or no Miss Beezley, to present himself on these occasions. This, by the way, was in the Easter holidays, so that there was no school to give him an excuse for absence.

Breakfast was a nightmare, lunch was rather worse, and as for dinner, it was quite unspeakable. Miss Beezley seemed to gather force during the day. It was not the actual presence of the lady that revolted the Babe, for that was passable enough. It was her conversation that killed. She refused to let the Babe alone. She was intensely learned herself, and seemed to take a morbid delight in dissecting his ignorance, and showing everybody the pieces. Also, she persisted in calling him Mr. MacArthur in a way that seemed somehow to point out and emphasise his youthfulness. She added it to her remarks as a sort of after-thought or echo.

"Do you read Browning, Mr. MacArthur?" she would say suddenly, having apparently waited carefully until she saw that his mouth was full.

The Babe would swallow convulsively, choke, blush, and finally say:—

"No, not much."

"Ah!" This in a tone of pity not untinged with scorn. "When you say 'not much,' Mr. MacArthur, what exactly do you mean? Have you read any of his poems?"

"Oh, yes, one or two."

"Ah! Have you read 'Pippa Passes'?"

"No, I think not."

"Surely you must know, Mr. MacArthur, whether you have or not. Have you read 'Fifine at the Fair'?"

"No."

"Have you read 'Sordello'?"

"No."

"What *have* you read, Mr. MacArthur?"

Brought to bay in this fashion, he would have to admit that he had read "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," and not a syllable more, and Miss Beezley would look at him for a moment and sigh softly. The Babe's subsequent share in the conversation, provided the Dragon made no further onslaught, was not large.

One never-to-be-forgotten day, shortly before the end of her visit, a series of horrible accidents resulted in their being left to lunch together alone. The Babe had received no previous warning, and when he was suddenly confronted with this terrible state of affairs he almost swooned. The lady's steady and critical inspection of his style of carving a chicken completed his downfall. His previous experience of carving had been limited to those entertainments which went by the name of "study-gorges," where, if you wanted to help a chicken, you took hold of one leg, invited an accomplice to attach himself to the other, and pulled.

But, though unskilful, he was plucky and energetic. He lofted the bird out of the dish on to the tablecloth twice in the first minute. Stifling a mad inclination to call out "Boundary!" or something to that effect, he laughed a hollow, mirthless laugh, and replaced it. When a third attack ended in the same way, Miss Beezley asked permission to try what she could do. She tried, and in two minutes the chicken was neatly dismembered. The Babe reseated himself in an overwrought state.

"Tell me about St. Austin's, Mr. MacArthur," said Miss Beezley, as the Babe was trying to think of something to say—not about the weather. "Do you play football?"

"Yes."

"Ah!"

A prolonged silence.

"Do you"——began the Babe at last.

"Tell me"——began Miss Beezley, simultaneously.

"I beg your pardon," said the Babe; "you were saying——?"

HE LOFTED THE BIRD OUT OF THE DISH ON TO THE TABLECLOTH TWICE IN THE FIRST MINUTE.

"Not at all, Mr. MacArthur. *You* were saying——?"

"I was only going to ask you if you played croquet?"

"Yes; do you?"

"No."

"Ah!"

"If this is going to continue," thought the Babe, "I shall be reluctantly compelled to commit suicide."

There was another long pause.

"Tell me the names of some of the masters at St. Austin's, Mr. MacArthur," said Miss Beezley. She habitually spoke as if she were an examination paper, and her manner might have seemed to some to verge upon the autocratic, but the Babe was too thankful that the question was not on Browning or the higher algebra to notice this. He reeled off a list of names.

". . . Then there's Merevale—rather a decent sort—and Dacre."

"What sort of a man is Mr. Dacre?"

"Rather a rotter, I think."

"What is a rotter, Mr. MacArthur?"

"Well, I don't know how to describe it exactly. He doesn't play cricket or anything. He's generally considered rather a crock."

"Really! This is very interesting, Mr. MacArthur. And what is a crock? I suppose what it comes to," she added, as the Babe did his best to find a definition, "is this, that you yourself dislike him." The Babe admitted the impeachment. Mr. Dacre had a finished gift of sarcasm which had made him writhe on several occasions, and sarcastic masters are rarely very popular.

"Ah!" said Miss Beezley. She made frequent use of that monosyllable. It generally gave the Babe the same sort of feeling as he had been accustomed to experience in the happy days of his childhood when he had been caught stealing jam.

Miss Beezley went at last, and the Babe felt like a convict who has just received a free pardon.

One afternoon in the following term he was playing fives with Charteris, a prefect in Merevale's house. Charteris was remarkable from the fact that he edited and published at his own expense an unofficial and highly personal paper, called the *Glowworm*, which was a great deal more in demand than the recognised school magazine, the *Austinian*, and always paid its expenses handsomely.

Charteris had the journalistic taint very badly. He was always the first to get wind of any piece of school news. On this occasion he was in possession of an exclusive item. The Babe was the first person to whom he communicated it.

THE BABE KNEW THAT VOICE.

"Have you heard the latest romance in high life, Babe?" he observed, as they were leaving the court. "But of course you haven't. You never do hear anything."

"Well?" asked the Babe, patiently.

"You know Dacre?"

"I seem to have heard the name somewhere."

"He's going to be married."

"Oh!"

"Yes. Don't trouble to try and look interested. You're one of those offensive people who mind their own business and nobody else's. Only I thought I'd tell you. Then you'll have a

remote chance of understanding my quips on the subject in next week's *Glowworm*. You laddies frae the north have to be carefully prepared for the subtler flights of wit."

"Thanks," said the Babe, placidly. "Good-night."

The head-master intercepted the Babe a few days after as he was going home after a scratch game of football. "MacArthur," said he, "you pass Mr. Dacre's house, do you not, on your way home? Then would you mind asking him from me to take preparation to-night? I find I shall be unable to be there?" It was the custom at St. Austin's for the head to preside at preparation once a week; but he performed this duty, like the celebrated Irishman, as often as he could avoid it.

The Babe accepted the commission. He was shown into the drawing-room. To his consternation, for he was not a society man, there appeared to be a species of tea-party going on. As the door opened somebody was just finishing a remark.

"... faculty which he displayed in such poems as 'Sordello,'" said the voice.

The Babe knew that voice.

He would have fled if he had been able, but the servant was already announcing him. Mr. Dacre began to do the honours.

"Mr. MacArthur and I have met before," said Miss Beezley, for it was she. "Curiously enough, the subject which we have just been discussing is one in which he takes, I think, a great interest. I was saying, Mr. MacArthur, when you came in, that few of Tennyson's works show the poetic faculty which Browning displays in 'Sordello.'"

The Babe looked helplessly at Mr. Dacre.

"I think you are taking MacArthur out of his depth there," said Mr. Dacre. "Was there something you wanted to see me about, MacArthur?"

The Babe delivered his message.

"Oh, yes, certainly," said Mr Dacre. "Shall you be passing the school-house to-night? If so, you might give the head-master my compliments, and say I shall be delighted."

The Babe had had no intention of going out of his way to that extent, but the chance of escape offered by the suggestion was too good to be missed. He went.

On his way he called at Merevale's, and asked to see Charteris.

"Look here, Charteris," he said, "you remember telling me that Dacre was going to be married?"

"Yes."

"Well, do you know her name by any chance?"

"I ken it weel, ma braw Hielander. She is a Miss Beezley."

"Great Scott!" said the Babe.

"Hullo! Why, was your young heart set in that direction? Oh, Babe, Babe; I'm afraid you're a sad, bad young dog. I think we'd better have a story on the subject in the *Glowworm*, with you as hero and Dacre as villain. It shall end happily, of course. I'll write it myself."

"You'd better," said the Babe, grimly. "Oh, I say, Charteris."

"Well?"

"When I come as a boarder I shall be a house-prefect, sha'n't I, as I am in the Sixth?"

"Yes."

"And prefects have to go to breakfast and supper, and that sort of thing, pretty often with the house-beak, don't they?"

"Such are the facts of the case."

"Thanks. That's all. Go away and do some work. Good-night."

The cup went to Merevale's that year. The Babe played a singularly brilliant game for them.

BANDITS IN MEXICO.

By Enrique de Grijalva. Sketches by H. A. Hogg.

DIPLOMATIC relations have been recently established between Austria and Mexico, for the first time since the assassination of the Emperor Maximilian by the Revolutionaries.

Many people have forgotten, and few know much, about the drama of Queretaro. History hardly recalls the fact that an emperor, brother to one of the powerful sovereigns of Europe, was annihilated in cold blood.

But he cannot be forgotten so easily by those who were his most ardent followers and partisans, and in whose memory he lives eternally. He was the idol of his troops and the hope of his country, yet he lived to see his brilliant empire shattered and himself a prisoner.

In those times Mexico was infested by brigands, who carried on their nefarious trade unmolested, as the Government had its hands full trying to keep down the different factions that were drenching the country with blood. There were no police to speak of, but when anything of special importance was to be transported from one town to another, the Government, when it had time to think, sent with it a convoy of soldiers. However, this was a privilege that only the very rich could enjoy, and even then many preferred running the risk and going without, as endless annoyances were the consequence.

There were many bands of robbers, but the one that interests us the most was called the "Silver Bells," a very powerful association composed mainly of outlawed men, or *gauchos malos* (criminals).

Most of them were fine, tall, and very strong men, picturesquely attired, with the little silver bells (from which they took their name) hanging from every fold. Splendidly mounted, and possessing the best arms of the day, they were more than a match for anyone, excepting, perhaps, the best of the Government troops.

Having their abode in some inaccessible mountain fortress, they would suddenly pounce down on a passing diligence, take everything, and be off again before the unfortunate owners could get over their surprise. They rarely, if ever, did bodily harm to anyone; but, when put to the test, proved that they were the finest shots in the land.

On occasions they did not scruple to take the very clothes from the backs of their victims, especially when not quite satisfied with the quality or the quantity of the booty. A robber chief once gave my grandfather, in exchange for his own good clothes, a few newspapers and pins, out of which my grandfather had to make a suit. I may add that hot blankets were always kept ready at village posadas, with which to hide the somewhat primitive costumes the passengers might be wearing on alighting from a despoiled diligence.

Only once to my knowledge did the brigands use violence against my family, and on that occasion they attacked a lonely country house, in which my grandparents were living, but were repulsed after some severe fighting — my grandmother herself defending a window with a revolver. In those days the ladies had to imitate the men in emergencies, and were never found wanting.

After a raid on a diligence it was no use grumbling, as the gauchos were the masters of the situation, so it was not uncommon, after permission had been given, that a departure would take place amidst great cracking of whips, smiles, and mutual good wishes—especially if the takings had been small.

On one occasion, however, a carriage full of well-to-do ladies was held up, and, the cargo being unusually rich, the business of relieving *las señoras* of their jewels was carried on amidst great silence and haughty disdain.

Only one young lady could not restrain her tears at the sight of her trunks being taken down, and the robber chief, noticing them, asked her what made her cry, seeing that all the other ladies treated the whole matter with such stony indifference. At this she replied that she was not so rich as her friends, and had arrived from Europe with her trousseau, being on the eve of marriage, and did not know how she could replace it!

At these words the chief turned to his comrades and said: "This lady's trunks are to be put back immediately." To her astonishment, and also that of her companions, all her things were at once

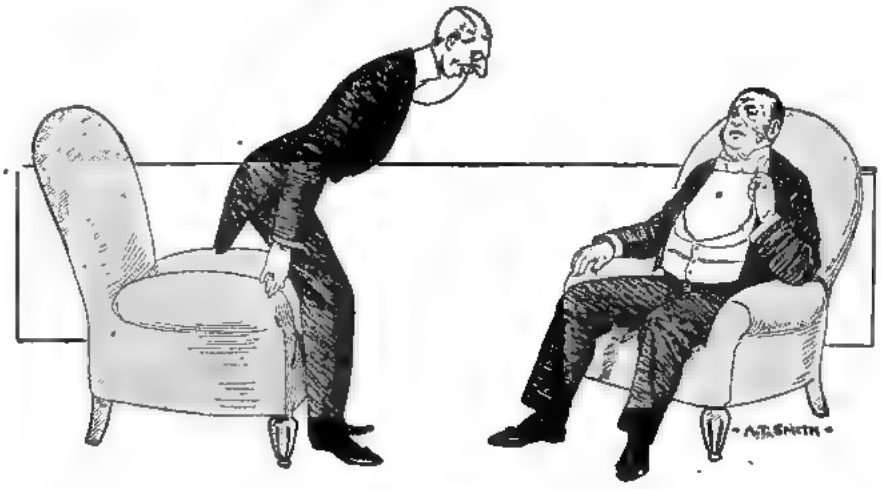
replaced. Much would her friends have liked to follow her example, and I believe that one or two did try it, but no notice was taken of their efforts, and so they lost all. Indeed, I doubt if a pack of howling women would have produced the same effect as those few unostentatious tears.

In most other countries such an order would have had quite a contrary effect, and few would have been found ready to obey unquestioned the slightest command of their nominated chief. They recognised their chief as a real commander; his word was law. As it was, their implicit obedience formed their strength, and made them feared and respected all the country round.

Once, as my grandfather was travelling alone in a very wild part of the country, he was met by a band of the "Silver Bells." Coming forward very politely, hat in hand, the chief took his purse and all the valuables he had, leaving him destitute, but very glad not to have lost his clothes as well As they were going my grandfather remarked that he did not know how he would get his next meal, as every penny he had was in the chief's pocket.

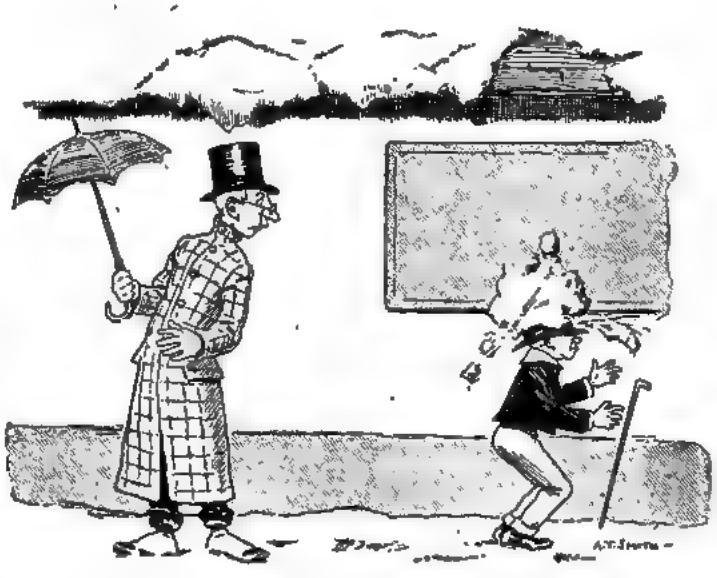
"It is true, señor," answered the bandit, as, opening my grandfather's *own* purse, he gave him a piece of gold. It was gratefully accepted, and my grandfather went on his way.

SHE HAD ARRIVED FROM PUEBLA WITH HER TROUSSEAU



OVER-EXERTION.

PATAH: "You look tired, Bertie; what have you been doing to-day?"
BERTIE: "Twied on fowar new pairs of twousers bafaw dinnah!"



"Dear me! What an exceptionally large snowflake!"

THE CYCLING CORNER

By HAYDON PERRY.

ON POSE AND ACTION.

THERE are so many people that one sees riding badly that, although it is an old story, the proper way of riding cannot be told too often. It seems, indeed, a duty to preach it until its principles are followed universally, and I am afraid that that time is still a long way off. One sees fellows, and, for that matter, sometimes girls, too, riding along in all sorts of ridiculous and wasteful postures—wasteful in the sense that the amount of energy expended in so riding is far in excess of what is needful in order to spin along at the same pace when working properly.

I will deal with the commonest fault first. It is, without question, that of bending down over the handles. Now, in racing, especially in unpaced racing, it may be conceded that there is some advantage in this. For here wind resistance is a very important factor, and the racing man may gain more than he loses by adopting what, under other circumstances, would be a wholly incorrect posture. I have little doubt that the pictures published of racing men, as "snapped" while circling the track or making records on the road, have had much to do with the spread of the belief, especially among boys, that this stooping position is the best to adopt. You may take it from me, as an old hand, that it is absolutely and utterly wrong for all-round riding.

HOW NOT TO RIDE YOUR "BIKE."

This fellow is suffering from *kyphosis bicyclistarum*, or cyclists' hump.

Your best analogy for cycling is to be found in walking. I say this well knowing that there are writers on the subject who combat this view. I hold it, however, very strongly, and I think that, if it were possible to make a short definition of cycling, about the nearest phrase one could invent to meet the case would be that it is "walking by machinery." Now, in walking, the posture is almost, but not quite, erect. So it should be in cycling, although the slight forward lean in walking may be just fractionally increased on the cycle, owing to the higher pace. In both exercises it is essential that limbs and muscles shall be so adjusted that they can be worked to the best advantage—that is to say, with most economy of the vital energies that drive them—and this cannot be done when some of the internal organs are cramped and others stretched ridiculously and unnecessarily.

How is it possible for the lungs to fill and empty themselves properly and with vigour if those organs are cramped up by a stooping back, while the principal muscle that does the breathing work is doubled and cramped in a similarly unnatural way? You have only to stand near some well-known hill in your own district to watch the results of this waste of energy. I have numberless times seen the scorcher—who, mind you, is often a strong man—compelled to dismount at hills which a comparatively frail girl has mastered easily. This was because she had a reserve of energy to draw upon when

emergency called for it, whereas he had not. The heart, for example, may go on strike, and begin thumping against the ribs, if it is not given sufficient room to do its work in, and without a sound heart, in quiet working order, hill-climbing becomes a laborious, and even a dangerous, undertaking.

The hump-backed posture is productive of all kinds of evils. I have seen accidents innumerable arise from it. Only the other day I witnessed a bad collision that would not have occurred if the cyclist had been riding properly. He was, however, a member of what I will call the chin-and-elbow contingent. He was riding between tram-lines, and on his wrong side of the road, his face bent down and apparently intent upon the setts just in front of his wheel. He was rapidly approaching a tramcar. The driver shouted, brought his car to a standstill, and drew the horses aside; but our youth went pell mell into them, and was about as badly hurt as he deserved to be.

But more serious things may happen to a rider who persists in adopting such an unnatural attitude. About eight years ago the Medical Press gave a great deal of attention to this subject, and a learned doctor wrote in one journal to the effect that he had discovered a new disorder peculiar to cyclists. He named it "kyphosis bicyclistarum," which may be passed as good Latin for "cyclists' hump." There is no doubt that many cyclists have permanently injured themselves by cultivating this absurd deformity. I have again and again noticed that fellows who have complained to me that they do not sleep well after a long ride are guilty of this crouching habit, which cannot fail to do harm to the spinal cord and brain. It is not as in the old days before pneumatic tyres, when sleeplessness was often brought about by excessive vibration on the road. It was then discovered that the use of tobacco was a remedy, and I dare say many hundreds of young fellows took to smoking in consequence. But there is no need for that now. Those who cycle properly will sleep better, and not worse, after a good ride.

THE "BEGGING POODLE" ATTITUDE.

Now there is another fault, although not such a bad one as stooping, which I will mention now that I have disposed of the worst one. I am sorry to say that it is a fault to which girls are particularly prone. And that is the fault of sitting bolt upright, or even of leaning a little backward. The mistake was originally to a large extent the fault of cycle builders, who thought more about fashion than about useful and scientific form. They designed the up-branching handles, to which, in themselves, I have no sort of objection. But the makers made them branch up too much, so that girls were forced into what was, at a very early period, dubbed the "begging poodle" attitude. A backward lean, under such circumstances, was in a certain sense Nature's protest, the girl having a sort of ill-defined desire to get more away from her work.

The remedy for this fault is very simple. The handles should be so adjusted that when the rider is seated erect they are just within easy reach of the outstretched arms. That is to say that, when the rider is erect, the arms will have to be quite straight in order to grasp the grips. With the body bent almost imperceptibly forward, as it should be, the arms will be just a fraction short of their full stretch, which, again, is exactly as they should be. The precise rule for adjusting depends upon certain personal measurements; but, roughly speaking, it will be found that the handles are only a trifle higher than the seat

The position of the seat will, of course, be determined by the reach of the rider. This is so important that at the risk of repetition I will briefly explain it again. The proper reach is such that when the rider is comfortably seated, and the pedal at its furthest point from the saddle—that is, just before it has come round to its lowest position—the straightened leg can just touch the pedal-pin with the heel, there being at the time no shoe upon the foot. This rule, will, if followed, place the rider at the very best possible distance from the work, where the work can be done with the greatest ease and advantage, and where a comfortable pose and graceful action will be naturally assumed.

There will be no swaying from side to side—a practice to be condemned as bad style on every count. There will be neither push nor pull upon the handles, but the hands will simply rest on them, leaving the machine to steer its own straight line as the result of evenly balanced pedalling. And this evenness can only be truly attained by the ankle action I have previously spoken of. The secret of attaining it lies in

striving to do as much as possible with the ankles, and as little as possible with the knees. When this art has been mastered the learner will discover that ankling has been slightly exaggerated, and that the most advantageous way of pedalling is to ply the ankles just a trifle less, and the knees just a trifle more. There is no exact rule about it, but the happy compromise will readily be found out in each individual case. When the art is once acquired the difference it makes is amazing. Up hills the labour seems to be halved, while running on the level, under ordinary circumstances, seems to be no work at all.

When the pose and action I have described have become instinctive, as they soon will, the rider who possesses them as his or her own, will have become one of the few whom it gives one real pleasure merely to see pass down a road. I know of nothing in all athletics that affords quite so charming a sight as the vision of a girl who really rides well, sits well, and is well dressed for the work. Her dress is neat, without too much hat or skirt, and it fits easily. Her head is erect, looking forward or about her, and she pedals gracefully along with lots of reserve energy with which to enjoy her surroundings. There is about her then an unconscious dignity—and mark that consciousness of it more than half destroys it—which carries with it a charm wherever she goes, and gives rise everywhere to the self-put question as to why some people look so much better on bicycles than others do. I wish all my readers of either sex the acquisition of this art of true style in riding. Some may possess it now, but I am convinced that the majority do not, or this article would never have been written. When those who do not have succeeded in acquiring it, as they so easily may, they will see the pastime that we love in a new light, and will derive from it a pleasure before undreamed of.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"Old Eccles" (Eaton), **"Timid"** (Uppingham), **and others.**—There is no tyre that gives immunity from side-slip. I like the Palmer, the Clincher, the Dunlop, and one or two other designs, as being instrumental in making it less likely to occur. But none of them will make it impossible. I have often heard riders say, after describing a bad fall, "And I had non-slipping tyres on, too." You cannot trust solely to the pattern of the tread, however good that may be. The only secret of avoiding side-slip is the keeping of the wheel in a plane, at right angles to the supporting surface. This means that you should pick out the flattest places in the road, and ride as good a straight line along them as you can. When making a curve, except at very slow paces, you perceptibly lean towards its centre, and that is why the wobbler is very liable to side-slip. It is also a reason why it is well to take the sloping part of the road—road makers call it the "haunch"—when going round corners, unless this, as in cases of turning to the right, might put you on your wrong side of the traffic. If the slope is right for you it acts as what the railway engineers call a cant, and so allows you, even when leaning over as you make the curve, to keep at right angles to the supporting surface—which is the only rule that will save you. **Eva** (Leanderis).—The reason a bicycle in motion can be kept upright is not difficult to understand if you will think closely for a moment and try to follow me. It is true that it has puzzled many people besides yourself, and it is also true that many quite unsatisfactory (because incorrect) explanations of it have been given. Remember that every erect object tends to fall, and is only prevented from doing so so long as its centre of gravity remains in a vertical line directly over some part of the area of support. If you happen to know something of the structure of the human form, you know that our skeletons are clothed with an elaborate and beautiful system of muscles, designed with the object of maintaining the body in an erect posture. If you do not know this you may take it from me that it is so. We are never free from the tendency to fall, but by instinctively pulling the right muscle or set of muscles we are able to remain upright. That is, we are able to pull the centre of gravity of the body so that we can always keep it in such a position as to be directly over some part of the small area of support offered by the feet. Now for a moment I must ask you to consider the case of the tight rope walker, which may at the first glance seem to you to have nothing to do with the question, but which is really a very good illustration. He commonly has a long pole which he carries in his hands crosswise as regards its relative position to the rope. The function of this pole is a very important one. The equilibrist is always falling either to the one side or the other, although he is clever enough to conceal that fact from you. The instant he feels himself falling to the right he makes a slight movement of the pole in a direction to his left, and so brings the centre of gravity of the "system," as it is called, of himself and the pole combined exactly over the line of the rope again. Note that he cannot alter the position of the rope, which is fixed at both ends. Remember that if he could, such alteration would do just as well, for he would then be able to move the rope to a position exactly under his centre of gravity—the only condition upon which his equilibrium really depends. The people who perform as wire walkers have precisely the same problem always before them. If they use no pole they must still be constantly correcting the ever present tendency to fall, and this they do by a movement of the arm, the hand, or even of a finger, shooting one out to the left, we will say, almost before they feel they are falling to the right. Now you may be surprised to know that in effect every cyclist is a rope walker. You must regard the rope as the sinuous track he makes along the road. But here note the difference. The cyclist carries no pole, nor does he by any motions of his body try to sway himself back from his incipient falls into a position such that his centre of gravity shall again be exactly over the rope. He simply moves the rope. That is, when he finds himself falling, we will say, to the right, he steers slightly to the right, thus bringing the line of his track, which I have likened to his rope, once more exactly under him. He is always falling, whether he knows it or not. That is why the learner wobbles so outrageously and sometimes actually and in fact does fall.

A DECAYED PORT.

ARTICLES have appeared in the magazines dealing with the decayed ports around our coasts, but the pretty little Hampshire village of Hamble, which was a port of equal commercial importance with Southampton and Portsmouth, before such places as Liverpool and Manchester monopolised the merchant traffic of the sea, is, I think, quite unknown to all except those in the immediate neighbourhood.

Here is an extract from a very quaint old geography of the world, dated 1665, which shows how important Hamble was at the time of the Restoration. This geography, in speaking of "Hant-shire," says:—

"Havens it hath, and those both commodious to let in and to loose out ships of great burden in trade of merchandise, whereof Portsmouth, Titchfield, Hamble, and Southampton are chief."

At the present day Hamble lives, or rather goes to sleep on its reputation, for the river is only used as a winter anchorage for private yachts, and for a very little fishing trade, though there is, to be sure, a small building shed where a hammer is occasionally heard

Hamble is situated between Southampton and Portsmouth, and seven miles nearer the sea than Southampton—the great rival that has left it so far behind. The village is a little way up the broad River Hamble, and makes a very snug harbour. It is built on the steep bank and is

SHIPPING ON THE HAMBLE.
(Photograph by W. H. Simmons.)

not at all unlike a Cornish village; the church is at the top, and the narrow, old-fashioned street winds down to the little beach at the bottom. The only things that appear to have any life are the dogs.

The country all around is very beautiful, and attracts many local artists, as well as parties of cyclists, who go to Hamble to get a "crab tea."

THE BEACH, HAMBLE.
(Photograph by W. H. Simmons.)

Titchfield, the other port mentioned as thriving in the fifteenth century, is situated some long distance up another river, which enters the Solent much nearer Portsmouth. The quaintest part of this old place is the church, in which the Earls of Southampton are buried. It is interesting to note that it is from Titchfield that the eldest son of the Duke of Portland derives his title.

W. H. SIMMONS.

ON TONING P.O. PAPERS.

(In reply to H. F. Smith and Others.)

As several of our correspondents seem to be in difficulties over toning their P.O.P. prints, we will endeavour to give clear and simple directions for conducting that operation. We will say, at once, that we cannot under any circumstances recommend the combined toning and fixing, as prints so prepared are extremely liable to fade. The toning bath we recommend is the simple and widely used sulphocyanide bath. This is best made up from two separate stock solutions, which will keep for a very long time. To make these, buy 1oz. of sulphocyanide of ammonium and dissolve in 20ozs. of water; add to this solution 30grs. of carbonate of soda. Place this in a clean bottle, and label, "Sulphocyanide Solution, 1 in 20." Also buy one 15gr. tube of gold chloride. Dissolve the contents of this in 15ozs. of water; place in a clean bottle, and label, "Gold Solution, 1oz. equals 1gr." These solutions are best kept in a cupboard away from strong daylight.

About one hour before you are ready to tone your prints, make up your bath with 1oz. of the sulphocyanide solution, 13ozs. of water, and, lastly, 2ozs. of gold solution. This will be sufficient to tone about thirty quarter-plate pieces of P.O.P. It is best to save your prints until you have at least half that number, and in that case you may use half the quantities in the same proportion as above.

The prints must be thoroughly washed in plain water for fifteen minutes, seeing that the water is completely changed several times. Then place your toning bath in a dish, which should be of such a size that it will hold two of the largest prints you are toning side by side, and there should be a sufficient quantity of solution to cover the dish to the depth of at least 1in. Take the prints one by one from the washing water, and drain as much of the water away as possible; put them face downwards into the toning bath, taking care that air-bells do not form on the surface. This end is best achieved by dropping the prints edgewise into the bath, and not throwing them on the surface. Proceed in this way until you have about six prints in your toning bath, keeping them in motion all the time with one hand. Now turn them over, and you will observe that those placed in first have considerably changed in colour, being less red. Examine them by holding them up to the light and looking through them. When they have acquired the colour you desire on looking through them, move them into a dish containing a weak solution of common salt, about 1 in 40. Proceed in this way until the whole of the prints are finished. Then pour away the bath you have been using into a bottle kept specially for that purpose. Move your prints out of the salt solution into a dish of clean water; or you may carefully drain away the salt solution, and fill up the dish with clean water, and thoroughly separate and rinse the prints in it.

Have ready in another dish a *fresh* solution of hyposulphite of soda, 1 in 10. Put your prints one by one as quickly as possible into this solution, keeping them separate and in motion for ten minutes. Then move the prints into the washing water, wash from thirty minutes to one hour, giving at least four to six changes. Then place the prints for five minutes in a solution of alum, 1 in 20; wash for ten minutes and then the prints are ready for drying.

Drain your prints by getting them carefully to the bottom of the dish and standing the dish up on edge. The prints may then be laid out, preferably on a clean calico sheet, face upwards. Any surface which is innocuous may be used.

If possible, special dishes should be kept for these operations; on no account should a dish which has been used for developing plates be used for toning; nor should the slightest trace of hypo be allowed to come near the prints until they are quite ready for fixing.

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC EDITOR.

"CAPTAIN" CLUB

CONTRIBUTIONS.

ONE Year's Subscription to THE CAPTAIN is awarded to J. CAMERON, Ceylon Cottage, Culduthel Road, Inverness, for his humorous illustrations in these pages.

Euclid.—Book XIII.

Proposition 99.—Problem.

Enunciation.—On one wide road, and between two ditches, it is not possible for one thin man to teach one fat man to cycle.

Statement.—Let Jones equal "Fat Man," and U (you) equal "Thin Man," and Machine equal "New Bicycle." It is required, if possible, to teach Jones to ride Machine.

Construction.—From shed draw Machine, and produce it; take up Jones and place him upon Machine, so that one leg shall be upon one pedal and the other leg shall be upon other pedal; likewise each hand on a handle. Set teeth, and draw a bee line for neither ditch.

Proof.—Now since "Fat Man" equals twice "Thin Man," and Jones equals "Fat Man," and U equal "Thin Man," therefore Jones equals W (double you), therefore U feel weak. If Jones be let fall perpendicularly on U, and Jones's vocabulary equals twice yours, take away common word, and there remains Jones repeating it to U. In like manner it can be proved that U are equal to no more teaching that day, which also equals a right wrangle. It can also be shown that Machine *plus* fall equals Machine *minus* two circles and ever so many radii (wheels and spokes).

Therefore, by deduction, Jones cannot be taught to ride Machine.—Q.E.D.

JAMES H. SKUSE.

THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH THIS PHOTOGRAPH. WHAT IS IT?
(By Noah Mayne.)

How to Become an Architect.

In a recent issue of this magazine there was a correspondence note entitled "How to become an Architect."

Now, as one of your readers whose articles in that profession will be completed next month, I cannot help thinking that the difficulties in the way of the beginner are somewhat over-estimated by your correspondent, at any rate for those desirous of commencing in the provinces. In the first instance you say, "You may enter the profession as pupil, improver, or assistant." Now, it is quite impossible for anyone to do the work of an assistant without at least three years apprenticeship and experience; and the position of improver is generally taken by those who have already completed their articles. Most architects pay improvers a moderate salary, not exceeding £75 per annum, although some of the very best firms not only receive the services of the improver gratis, but also receive a premium in exchange for the experience to be gained.

Many of the smaller provincial architects are prepared to present pupils with their articles in exchange for services alone, but the premium in London may be anything; up to £500 in rare cases. The pupil would serve three or four years, according to his age at the date of commencement, but most pupils are out of their time at the age of twenty. It is, as you say, most desirable that students should pass the examinations of the Royal Institute of British Architects, but the certificate for the preliminary examination would be of little service in obtaining a situation as assistant, as it is merely a test of general education, and should be passed before

"Do you want a boy, sir?"

"Yes."

"What sort of a boy?"

"A nice, clean boy, who doesn't swear or smoke, or tell lies, or ——"

"That'll do; I guess it's a girl you want!"

(By J. Cameron.)

the pupil leaves school. Finally, it may be stated that situations may be readily obtained by proficient assistants, although the salary of the same is hardly an adequate return for the study involved. I trust you will insert this letter for the benefit of your correspondents and others.

PROVINCIAL PUPIL.

Jersey.

Jersey, my home, is small, its shape is oblong, and it is pretty—pretty to those who are having their first peep at the kind of scenery we possess, but when you are one of the inhabitants, you get a bit sick of it, I assure you. Now let me tell you a little about the island itself and its inhabitants. There are two railways in the island, and it's not a bad allowance. They somewhat resemble bird-cages and chicken-runs in shape, and the trains are not of the greatest speed. The ground they run over is not above six miles at the most. The town folk speak English, but they can speak French, and in the country the labourers speak a patois, which chiefly consists of the old Norman French. The real language of the island is French, and there are numerous French hotels in the town of St. Heliers.

Of buildings and churches there are plenty—some of the latter very ancient, the oldest being St. Brelade's, consecrated 1111 A.D. One of the first places visited by the tourist is Mont Orgueil Castle, which is said to have been built by Julius Cæsar. Among the curiosities in this quaint old place are the remains of a chapel dedicated to George; cells in which some Parliamentarians were confined in the Civil War of Charles I.; also a cell where Prynne, the Puritan, was kept. Another interesting place is the house where Charles II. hid himself when in Jersey, ever since called "Le Bel Royal." Another fine old relic is Elizabeth Castle, built during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, beyond which castle is a rock where a hermit was cruelly murdered by Norman pirates. Hence, it was called the Hermit Rock.

A BALLOON ASCENT IN THE RAIN.

This balloon got away just as the aeronaut was climbing in, and was found next day twenty miles from the starting place.

(Photograph by G. W. Ivey.)

The visitor finds plenty to do, for he can drive, sail, fish, and walk; but the resident finds nothing. He does the same thing, and meets the same people every day. The nearest port in France to Jersey is Portbail, fifteen miles distant. It may be interesting to readers to know that Jersey is twelve miles long and seven miles broad. What a difference to Old England!

HUGH LESLIE DOBRÉE.

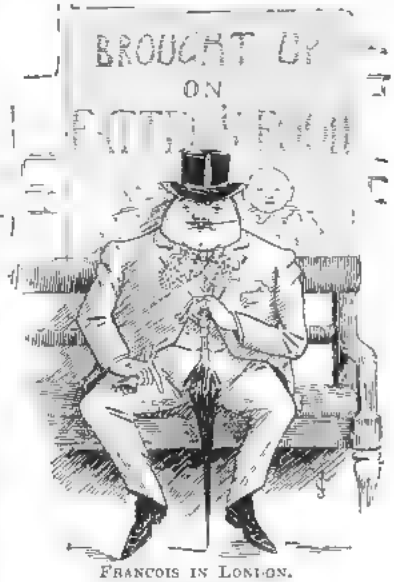
DAVY JONES AT HOME.

(By W. Bridge.)

The Guinea Pig.

The guinea pig hails from South America, and is not, as is the general opinion in the more ignorant circles,

a native of Guinea. The origin of its name is uncertain, unless, as many pet fanciers explain, a guinea was given to the owner of the first of its tribe that was introduced into England. As a hutch, I might suggest a packing case, with a partition wall, containing a small opening through which the creature could pass without difficulty. One side should be left open in the front, and wire fixed across; the other should be closed on every side, that the sow may obtain perfect warmth when breeding.

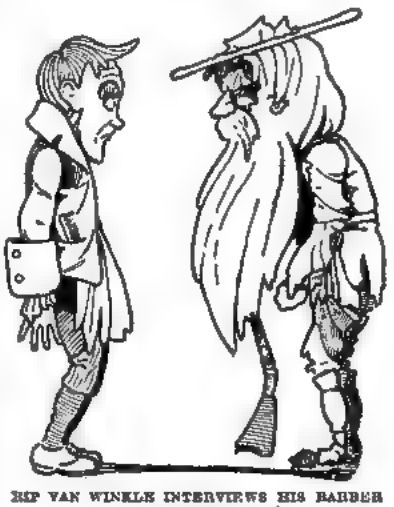


FRANCOIS IN LONDON.
"Vat does Englesh laugh at? Day are most rude!"
(By J. Cameron.)

Fresh hay should be spread every morning, to form the animal's bed; and great care should be taken as to the sanitary arrangements.

With regard to food, one could not do better than supply it with plenty of vegetables, such as lettuce and cabbage, and bran or oats should occasionally be given it for a change. Great care should be taken when the animal breeds, in food as well as in cleanliness, for a tame guinea pig is marvellously prolific compared with a wild one. On the whole, the guinea pig is a very fair pet, and is not hard to manage, so let me recommend it to all readers of THE CAPTAIN.

E. A. MEGGINSON.



RIP VAN WINKLE INTERVIEWS HIS BARBER AFTER HIS TWENTY YEARS' SLEEP.
(By W. Bridge.)

[At the same time, I must warn readers against adopting pets of any description unless they are thoroughly acquainted with the way to look after them, and know what to do in case they are unwell; or unless they have someone at hand to advise and direct them. A great deal of suffering is caused among pets through the ignorance of persons who keep them.—ED. CAPTAIN.]

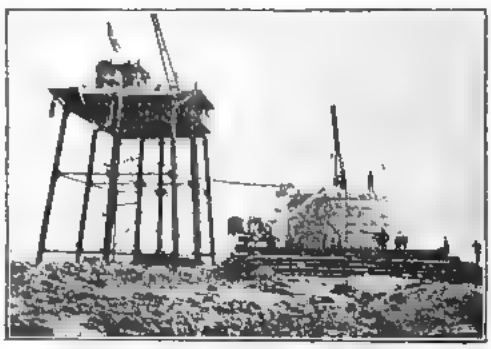
Lifeboat Day in Cambridge.

Lifeboat Day is celebrated every year in Cambridge by having a lifeboat from a seaside station launched on the River Cam; and by a procession.

I was present on the last occasion, and witnessed the launching of the boat and the procession.

This procession was made up with the help of the fire brigade, the lifeboat from Ilfracombe, drawn by six horses, the Boys' Brigade band, also a military band, and some decorated bicycles. Prizes were given for the bicycles which were judged to be decorated the best.

A number of men were running here and there



THE BUILDING OF THE NEW LIGHTHOUSE AT EASTBOURNE.
(Photograph by E. B. Lye.)

with long bamboo poles, on which bags were tied, collecting money in aid of the National Lifeboat Institution. Even the spectators at the upper windows could not escape these collectors, for the poles were capable of reaching the highest windows.

The riders of the bicycles, when the parade had started, placed their hands on each others' shoulders to steady themselves a bit, for they found it hard to keep their balance, going at such a slow pace. Suddenly the order was given to halt, and the result was that the unfortunate cyclists, not being prepared for a sudden stoppage, all fell off, some on top of the others. They soon started again, laughing heartily at their mishap.

The lifeboat at last reached the Victoria Bridge, where it was to be launched. The horses were

unharnessed, and the boat was slowly guided to the edge of the water. It was pushed off the wheels, and went into the water with a splash. The rudder caught on the steep bank and came right off. The boat nearly ran into the opposite bank. The rudder was fixed on, and apparently the calm Cam was nothing to these hardy men, who made their burly craft rush up and down the river amid the cheers of the people.

EDWIN L. REED

[This idea might be adopted by more inland towns with rivers, as it would afford people a chance of seeing the lifeboats and their crews, and make them put their hands into their pockets in support of one of the most worthy objects anybody can subscribe to.—ED. CAPTAIN.]

THIS IS WHAT APPEARED ON A BLACKBOARD AT THE END OF A LECTURE GIVEN BY MR. THEODORE WOOD AT TRENT COLLEGE ON THE BODY OF AN INSECT

(Photograph by J. O. S. Young.)

Two Proverbs: Are they True?

I.—"Tastes differ."

II.—"There is no accounting for tastes."

That tastes differ is well known But were tastes always the same? I mean—have men, at different periods of the world's history, always looked on the same things with pleasure or respect? Let us see.

What would the savage consider beautiful? His ideas, we know, are different—very different—to ours, as regards beauty. We should not, as do many African tribes, consider that the extension of the ears to an unusual length was beautiful, nor should we envy the owner his black teeth, as do many Asiatics. We respect a man for his courage, as do all men, savage or civilised. But there are different sorts of courage. A man's bravery is judged, amongst savage tribes, by the number of other savages slain by him. Even the "noble savage," as the North American Indian has been called, judges a man's prowess by the number of scalps he owns. The bravery here is not admired—it is respected.

Not so with us, however. We do respect bravery in a man, but admire him for his courage. It does not require courage to get rid of a certain number of men, to those who are used to it. Bravery is the essential quality here. It is the man who has to face all the perils of the unknown, and who does so unflinchingly; the man who stays at his post, though he knows it is certain death; the man who risks his life for another, the man who does all these, and is unused to it, that possesses that noble quality, courage. And that is what we admire him for. Courage wins our admiration, simple bravery our respect.

And in other things there is an equal difference in tastes. A savage, or a half-civilised man, has no taste for modern pictures, scenery, or sculpture. Nor have those who are under the influence of older civilisations, such as that of Turkey, or India, or China, any sympathy with such. Civilisation progresses, and with it the taste of mankind. Taste is a matter of education; the higher the education of a man the greater the taste he displays. "Tastes differ" it is true, but that there is a means of accounting for tastes we have endeavoured to show.

ALAN L. SNOW.

THE BOOKWORM.
By Clifford Dawson.

"CAPTAIN" CLUB CRITICISMS.

B. H. E. Price and **H. Platt.**—Your sketches denote fairly good composition. At the same time I shouldn't think you would make many thousands a year by draughtsmanship. Take this hint kindly. **J. E. Vinnicombe.**—Not half enough drawing in your contributions. Don't send in this kind of thing until you have had more practice. **"T. S."**—In your pencil sketch of the lady and the horse, the horse is very well drawn, but the lady is somewhat indifferent in draughtsmanship. In carrying out wash drawings use drawing paper mounted on board, preferably Whatman's. Then work up your subject in Indian or Chinese ink and use white for your high lights. See answers in back numbers. **A. B. Rosher.**—Thanks for your clever photograph of Dr. Grace and A. C. Fargus. I hope to use this during the coming cricket season. **A. H. Barnes.**—Your drawings are not strong enough for publication, but I shall be glad to see more of your work in the future. **Norman B. Ashford** and **Snooks, B. A.**—The sketches by the latter show great promise, and Snooks, B. A., is improving rapidly. The draughtsmanship of the former is much too niggled, and not sufficient time is given to outline, etc.

Contributions also received from: Morris S. Perrott (S. Australia)—too niggled again—Haystack, Len. B. Goodgame, A. W. Taylor, W. M. Wace, H. Hanson, K. R. Davis, Jos. Young, "Yorkshire," E. B. Lye, and a number of others whose names will be published next month.

12, BURLEIGH STREET, STRAND, LONDON.

Yes, we have been having a lively time in the office lately. You will no doubt like to hear about a few of the calls that have been paid me. The other day I was sitting in my arm-chair, peacefully perusing a delightful letter from a girl-reader in Switzerland, when the door opened suddenly and a very lean maiden lady entered with a large package under her arm. I rose gracefully, yet with a sigh, and the Art Editor, with a husky cough, retreated swiftly by a side door.

"Are you the Editor?" inquired my visitor.

"I am," I replied, with a bow, "that functionary."

"You sent me back my poems the other day, I believe?"

I bowed again; speech was useless.

"That was the sixth batch. I have done all six batches up into this bundle. I have come to tell you that I do not want them; in fact, I am going to let you keep them."

She raised the bundle on high.

I instantly divined that she was about to throw it at me!

"One moment," I cried. "I have a request to make."

"What is it?" she demanded.

"I beg you to throw that bundle *straight at my head.*"

"That is precisely my intention," she retorted, and she threw the bundle at my head, with the result, as I quite anticipated, that it went three yards wide and broke the clock.

"Thank you," I said. "I knew that if you threw it straight at me you would not hit me; few girls can throw straight."

With one fierce and indignant look she turned on her heel and walked out of the office. I rang the bell, and told the boy to go and get the clock mended.

Such are the trials and vicissitudes of an editor's life, but it sometimes has its relaxations. I returned to the reading of my delightful letter from Switzerland with a gentle sigh of content, and the Art Editor stole softly in from the outer apartment, simply whispering: "*She's gone!*"

The Idea Merchant was the next caller. He slipped in while the Fighting Editor was out having a sort of second lunch (hungry man, F. E.!), and said he had an entirely new idea to spring upon me. I asked him what it was, and he said:—

"I am going to write your biography."

I said, "All right—write away," and was going on with my work, when the Idea Merchant coolly took a chair and observed:—

"I am going to write this biography, honoured sir, in quite a new way. I am not going to ask you questions, but I am simply going to watch you."

I thought I had better humour the fellow, and so I said:—

"Well, I am afraid you will make me rather nervous if you sit and watch me like that. Suppose you get behind the screen, make a hole in it, and watch me that way?"

I will say this for the I. M.—he is always most ready in adopting suggestions. He immediately got behind the screen, and, taking out his jack-knife, commenced to bore a hole in the centre of that extremely handsome office ornament which shelters my desk from draughts and keeps timid contributors from knowing I am in until they come and peep round the corner of it. As I heard the I. M. going to work I gave a low chuckle, for the Fighting Editor has picked up an idea from the police, and wears indiarubber pads on his boots so that he can move about quietly. Well, just as the Idea Merchant was getting on splendidly

with the hole he was making in the screen, he suddenly felt himself clutched by the nape of the neck, whirled round in the air, and then flung with sickening velocity through the open door into the passage. He has decided to defer writing that biography *sine die*—that is to say, until he comes out of hospital.

Soon after the I. M. had vanished, I was visited by an American writer who occasionally favours me with a call (showing the Fighting Editor the muzzle of a six-shooter by way of passport). He came in and spoke as follows:—

"I prop contrib occas art to your val period on ornith, nat his, and lev of deep. Does my suggest meet with your appro?"

"Before I say whether it does or not," I replied, "will you kindly repeat your question?"

He repeated it.

"What does it mean?" I inquired.

"No time fin long words these days of fierce comp. Find it advis to abbrev much as poss. Do you consid my suggest of any val?"

I said, "If you will go home and write out your suggestion in full, and then send it to me, I shall be glad to give it my best consideration."

The following day I received this letter:—

991, King's Av., Ham., Lon., W

D. S.,—Reg press of lit work prev writ suggest in full. Fear neg as to contrib must be brok off. Ass you cord sym with your lab.—Bel me, y. v. t.,

ERN. PET. SMITH.

Should I be favoured with another call from Mr. Smith, I shall certainly give you a report of it, as above.

Every month we receive hundreds of newspaper reviews of THE CAPTAIN, couched in most kindly terms. It is not often, however, that a newspaper critic departs from his usual rule to comment upon us in the following picturesque manner. It came as a refreshing change, in the *Ayr Observer*:—

THE CAPTAIN, which is now in its thirty-third number, must prove a very paradise to boys. It is so bright, beautiful, and interesting that it makes we older fellows sigh, and say with the poet:—

"O to be a boy once more,
Curly headed, sitting singing,
Midst a thousand flowerets springing,"

and with THE CAPTAIN on our knee, and then, for the time being, we would not care a straw how the great world beyond fared. What would we not have given for such a monthly publication as this "when the dew of youth was upon us"?

"Captain" Club Coupon.—You will find in one of the advertisement pages a coupon, which members of THE CAPTAIN Club must cut out and attach to their letters when they write to our "experts" for information. I have established this coupon in order to protect the rights of members.

I am sure you will all be pleased to hear that Mr. C. B. Fry will in future write "Answers to Correspondents" for THE CAPTAIN *only*. Thus he becomes exclusively *one of us*. Mr. Fry not only writes for us—he is also a most regular reader of the old "CAP." He told me not long ago that he reads the magazine right through every month. In many ways this great athlete and idol of the cricketing public is quite a boy—that is, he has the enthusiasm and light-heartedness of a boy, combined with the solidity of purpose and wisdom of a strong man, in all senses.

"The Race of the Specials."—The exciting railway adventure which I print this month is by Mr. S. A. Parkes, who, it will be remembered, was part-author of "To Save the Mail," which appeared in the Christmas Number. Mr. Parkes is a son of the Mr. Charles A. Parkes who was Chairman of the Great Eastern Railway for many years, and who succeeded Lord Salisbury in that post. Our contributor (who, by the way, hails from Charterhouse and Cambridge) has studied every phase of railway life—even booking office work and engine-cleaning. He is a "driver" of no mean skill himself, can work a signal-box, and could act as guard of a train or ticket-collector at a pinch. He went through this varied course with the object of qualifying for the General Managership of a big line. However, fate decided otherwise; so now he has taken up his pen to turn his experience to profit.

Christmas and New Year Cards.—A number of pretty cards reached me at Christmas-tide and New Year-time, and still adorn my desk and mantelpiece, giving the office a right festive and seasonable appearance. I observe among the senders many "constant" readers of THE "CAP." The O. F. wafts his sincere acknowledgments to all of you!

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. P. A. P.—It is only in exceptional cases, such as when answering foreign readers, that we announce anyone as being "clubbed" in the Answers to Correspondents. Applicants must wait until the lists appear. All applications sent recently will appear in a supplementary list, which will be published when these regular lists are completed. Yes, address C.C. Contributions to the Editor. To cultivate a good style, read books like Birrell's

"Obiter Dicta" and John Richard Green's "Short History of the English People." Guard against being heavy in your style; be bright and brisk, but don't be flowery. Endeavour to convey information or thought in every sentence; don't string together a lot of meaningless words and think that's an essay. I have not read the two books you mention, and so I cannot speak about them. Your plan of writing digests of chapters without referring to the book is a good one, but it is better to write from Nature—that is to say, go and see something, or study someone's character, and put down your impressions in your own way.

L. N. is an "old boy" reader. He is also a bank clerk on £1 a week, and inquires whether I consider he ought to marry on that income. He adds that his *fiancée* is quite willing to take the plunge, and they now await my verdict. Some people are born to responsibility, some achieve it, and many have it thrust upon them. It seems that I belong to the last named class. I have it in my power (unless a couple of wise fathers intervene) to make this young couple miserable for life by uttering a mere monosyllable in the affirmative. I prefer to substitute an "if." If, then, "L. N." is willing to exist on a diet that is largely of a vegetable character (and hardly suitable for this climate, however well it may agree with Arabs), restrict himself to one clean collar a week (which would not reflect credit on his bank), occupy two small rooms in a poor thoroughfare (with a landlady who knows no mercy), and condemn himself to life-long shackles of poverty, he may certainly marry on £1 a week. But I trust that the two wise fathers will intervene.

J. M., whose letter-paper gives me to understand that he is a maker of clocks and watches, is good enough to give me some useful hints on the editing of this magazine. "J. M." confidently remarks that "he could do it a good deal better himself." I have no doubt at all on the subject, and am willing to let "J. M." occupy my editorial chair for one day if he, on the other hand, will allow me to take charge of his clocks and watches for the same period. "J. M." to attend to my correspondence to the best of *his* ability, while I attend to his repairs to the best of *my* ability. I am as ready to give the correct time to his timepieces as he is to give his odd time to criticising my "works."

Mr. James F. Smith, an "old boy" living at Southsea, became introduced to THE CAPTAIN in rather a quaint manner. After a two years' sojourn in South Africa he came home and took a house in Southsea. Strewn about were a few back numbers of THE CAPTAIN, left by a former occupier. These were speedily annexed by Mr. Smith's family. Mr. Smith himself casually glanced through one, became interested, and read the whole lot. The next day he bought the October number, which, he was happy to find, started a new volume. Thenceforth he became a regular subscriber, and I hope many other fathers will follow his excellent example!

"A Tale of Fearful Odds."—Maxwell Miller writes as follows: "Dear Old Fag,—In the December number of your good old paper it was stated, in the story 'A Tale of Fearful Odds,' that there is probably not a single survivor of that terrible swim of those who were so brave and valiant. There is—living a few doors from us—a gentleman named Gordon Thomson. He is in splendid health. He tells me that, though Murphy and Sullivan have passed away, Lieutenant Delafosse is still living. I showed the magazine to Mr. Thomson (or the "General," as we call him), and he told me the above, with permission to use his name."

M. D. F., a member of THE CAPTAIN Club, informs me that she has no home and no permanent address, "in fact, is always on the trot." Is she to inform me of her change of address every time she trots? "M. D. F." has my sincere sympathy. I shall consider her address as c/o THE CAPTAIN. By the way, I don't agree with her people, that her handwriting "is vile for a girl of eighteen." It will form into something better in time, as writing always does as one gets older; but it is by no means "vile," and is perfectly readable.

Longest Word.—J. S. S. writes: "In your November answers to correspondents, R. Emo has spelt his word wrong, and has put 'doublesax,' which does not mean anything, instead of 'dudelsack.' The word is really 'Constantinopolitannischeschaftische-dudelsackspfeifenmachergesellschaft,' which is a good deal longer. I know that this word is genuine, as I myself heard it in Germany, at Weimar. I also saw it in Mark Twain's book, 'A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur,' together with two other jaw-breakers."

B. H. W.—Hydrofluoric acid will etch glass, but I know of no acid which shows such etching only when breathed upon. Don't meddle with acids, however, unless you thoroughly understand their properties. I would suggest that what you require is some oily fluid that would be invisible upon the glass. You could then draw your pictures, and when breathed upon the moisture would not condense on the oil. This is a test of your inventive faculty.

M'sieu.—All I can advise you to do is to wait until you happen to meet some other French boy who wishes to exchange letters. I trust that when you give "Vive la France's" contributions as recitations, you acknowledge the source from which you have obtained them. I agree with you that they make admirable sketches to give at concerts, etc., and if you can "make up" like our picture of the Frenchman, so much the better.

Bookman.—The best example I know of the double meaning conveyed by some of our expressions is the stereotyped acknowledgment which Lord Beaconsfield is said to have been in the habit of sending to the authors who favoured him with copies of their books. It ran somewhat as follows: "Lord Beaconsfield begs to thank Mr. ——— for obliging him with a copy of ———, and begs to assure Mr. ——— that he will lose no time in perusing it."

H. E. F.—You are fortunate in having the means to start a gymnasium at your institute. You cannot do better than adapt your exercises from an excellent book entitled "One Thousand Gymnastic Exercises with Dumb-bells, Wands, and Indian Clubs," by F. J. Harvey, a gentleman of high standing in the gymnastic world; price 1s. post free. Address: F. J. Harvey, Esq., Gymnasium, Exeter.

Agriculturalist wishes to know if there are any "counties or rich landowners in the British Isles who give or lend free grants of land to farmers," after the manner of some of the Colonies. I fear no county or rich landowner has yet come forward in this philanthropic way. When the Millennium arrives I may be able to give "Agriculturalist" a reply in the affirmative.

A. G. A. Pamuda writes: "E. D. Gilbert, of Pocklington School, has a record which is, I think, quite as good as that of F. G. Brooks, of Bedford School, for he is captain of the footer eleven this season, was captain of cricket last season, president of the debating society, and is the fastest runner in, in addition to being head of, the school."

G. Henderson, Junr.—If your musical friends band together, as you suggest, practising once or twice a week at each other's houses by turn, you will in time, and without any undue effort, develop into an orchestral party, which, if sufficient mutual acquaintances can be persuaded to join, will grow into a society, and then you will be able to attempt big things.

F. H. Bracher.—I should advise you to study the board and residence columns in the daily papers, or advertise your wants; be careful about the house you go to. Quite the best thing you can do is to look about among your friends, and try and find someone who is well acquainted with a German family which will receive you.

Frank K. Hill (Sydney, N.S.W.).—Clubbed. You seem to be a go-ahead fellow, and I am glad to hear you are cultivating your muscles. I hope you will get all the Sydney fellows you know to take in The Captain for themselves, read it, keep it, and bind it.

E. A. M.—(1) Captain Matthew Webb, who swam from Dover to Calais in 21hrs. 45mins. on August 24-25, 1875, is the only man who has swum the Straits of Dover. (2) Fastest swim: 100yds. in 60secs. by H. Derbyshire, in November, 1898, at Manchester.

Citizen.—You can obtain all you want in the photographic line from the new depôt of the City Sale and Exchange, 90-94, Fleet Street, E.C., where you may also procure your football outfit, as this firm has recently opened a sports and games department.

N. D. Quirk and many others.—The names of all readers who applied for membership of The Captain Club after May 31st, 1901, will appear in the supplementary list, the present lists having been compiled down to that date.

Nil Desperandum.—You may be quite sure that if your competition reached this office it was judged with perfect fairness. Nothing could be more straightforward and impartial than the way our Competition Editor goes to work.

Crab.—(1) The largest signal-box in the world is that at Waverley Station, Edinburgh. (2) Remove the sting by pressing the barrel of a watch-key over the affected part. As to other remedies, consult some good housewife.

Paul Prosser.—I really cannot say whether your copies of *Punch* are of any value. You must take them to a dealer in old books and curiosities, and make your inquiries. I hardly think they are.

Nuisance.—Your pretty card now adorns my desk. Your questions as to the club will be answered in The Captain in due course. There is no need for any hurry in the matter.

F. D. Welward.—Your chest measurement will increase as you get older. Do plenty of dumb-bell exercises, and you will send it up by inches. You would be the better for a little more girth there.

S. A. E.—(1) Silkworms fed on green leaves produce yellow silk, while those fed on yellow mulberry leaves produce green silk. (2) The "Animal Story Book," by A. Lang, price 6s.

Cecil Morrell.—Thanks for bull's-eye stamp. This is not the first that has been sent us. I am glad to hear you like The Captain, and hope you will soon be better.

T. B.—Young starlings had best be fed upon small worms, snails, insects, etc. Take care their cage is not hung in a draught, and give them plenty of sunlight.

Hamlet.—I should not keep the coins if I were you; they will never be worth more than face value for a very long time. Change of address noted.

G. S. Jessup.—Mrs. H. Fawcett's "Political Economy for Beginners," price 2s. 6d. **W. Percy Smith.**—You should take your medals to Messrs. Spink & Son, of Piccadilly, W. **George L. Tod.**—"Rhodes Steamship Guide," published by George Philip & Son, 32, Fleet Street, London, E.C., price 1s. **Leigh Kent.**—"The King's Red Coat" appeared in Vol. I. of The Captain. **Wm. V. Stevenson.**—"Acton's Feud," now published in book form at 3s. 6d., and "Smith's House," which appeared in Vol. V. of The Captain. **G. N. R.**—Writing fair. Will improve as you get older. **J. H. Forrester.**—Thanks for your information. **J. M. Gittins.**—Send quite a short description to the C.C.C. pages. **F. F. F.**—*You* are wrong. One bell *is* a quarter to four, or eight or twelve (noon). **F. I. F. Smith.**—(1) Change of address noted. (2) You will find all you want to know in an A.B.C. railway time-table. **T. Cunliffe.**—I will keep your puzzle by me, and perhaps use it should I think of setting a competition of the sort.

Letters, etc., have also been received from: F. E. (Yeovil), Harry Conder-Clark, P. T. Kind, C. Palmer (clubbed), Edgar A. Leigh (change of address noted), G. Booker—(1) Clubbed, (2) Address Mr. Nankivell, care of this office—L. Gordon-Smith, "Ice Cream," A. B. C., "Reformer," "Ye Young Fag," and many others.

Official representatives appointed:—J. H. Weeks (Whitchurch), W. Percy Smith (Upper Tooting).

THE OLD FAG.

"CAPTAIN" CLUB—"CAPTAIN" BADGE—"CAPTAIN" STAMP.

Bonâ fide **purchasers of "The Captain" are invited to apply for membership of THE CAPTAIN CLUB. Members are entitled to advice from our "experts" free of charge. The Club was also founded with the object of spreading the sale of good literature generally. Readers are informed that "The Captain" Badge may now be obtained from "The Captain" Office, price Sixpence.**

FACSIMILE OF "THE CAPTAIN" STAMP, A NUMBER OF WHICH WILL BE FORWARDED TO ANY READER WHO SENDS STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.

The Badge is made (1) with a pin attached, for wearing on hat or cap, or as a brooch; (2) with a stud, to be worn on the lapel of the coat; and (3) with a small ring, as a watch-chain pendant. When applying please state which kind you require, and address all letters to: Badge Department, "The Captain," 12, Burleigh Street, Strand, London. The badge may also be had in silver for two shillings. There is no charge for postage.

Results of December Competitions.

No. I.—"Four Towns."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

10s. divided between: GERTRUDE STERLING, "The Rowans," Fleet, Hants; and RAYMOND PEACE, "Penica," Bridgwater, Somerset.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Horace T. Austin, Harold Buttfield, Emily J. Wood, C. J. Still, Wm. J. Leech, Frank A. Garratt, E. W. Stiles, Ulick Kyne, Albert Hill.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Eighteen.)

WINNER OF 10s.: FRED. HALES, "Ecclesbourne," Granville Road, Sidcup.

HONOURABLE MENTION: W. G. Parkinson, W. H. Hewitt, J. O. Hughes, Margaret P. Thompson, T. R. Davis, Stanley Mamelsdorf, J. E. Chambers, Frank M. Cundy, G. F. Sandon, Kittie Wade, C. S. Milledge, Percy A. Taffs.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Fourteen.)

WINNER OF 10s.: H. R. COMPTON, 44, Kenilworth Road, Ealing.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: H. C. GORDON-WELLS, Keith House, 215, North End Road, West Kensington, W.; ARTHUR M. SIMS, 8, Perham Road, West Kensington, W.

HONOURABLE MENTION: R. Peacock, A. H. Douglass, H. M. Hughes, Archibald Thornton, H. M. Vatcher, Edwin Russell Brown, Gabriel Bevan, Charles F. Mason, R. B. Hallowes.

No. III. "Anecdotes of Cats."

AN ORIGINAL DRAWING BY MR. LOUIS WAIN has been awarded to each of the following: JENNIE CLASPER, chez Monsieur Cardot, Aux Chesnaux, Château Thierry, Aisne, France. D. RICHARDS, "Maisonette," St. Saviour's Road, St. Leonard's; OLGA C. JACOBSEN, Milton-sub-Wychwood, Oxford; W. H. THOMPSON, Bank of Scotland Buildings, Callander, Scotland; GILBERT T. LUCAS, 8, Cromwell Square, Queen's Drive, Glasgow; G. BAINES, "Summerfield," Morley, near Leeds.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Nina M. Tancock, G. W. Ivey, Charles W. Gates, Gladys V. Morris, Maud M. Lyne, Wilson Midgley, Ernest V. Smiles, Harry Darnley, H. E. Houlston, G. T. Kerswell, H. J. Ponditch, Frank S. Griffith.

No. IV.—"Left-hand Writing.

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF 7s. ROSA PERLMEPTER, 317, Camden Road, Holloway, N.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: W. J. WHITE, "Fairlea," Abergavenny; and LESLIE BARTLETT, 38, Connaught Square, London, W.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Ursula M. Peck, E. F. F. Pickard, Alice Chamberlain, Mabel Shepherd, Annie W. Adams, Kathleen Deering, D. C. Hudson, Lulu Proctor, Cecily Tracy, Adela Bullock, Sydney Dewing.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Eighteen.)

WINNER OF 7s.: JANET THOMAS, "The Oaklands," Oswestry, Shropshire.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: HILDA MILLER, "Ormidale," Somerset Road, New Barnet, Herts; and G. HARPER, 10, Springbank Terrace, Aberdeen.

HONOURABLE MENTION: E. Carter, N. Matheson, Dora Avril, M. Hines, Gertie Creak, R. W. N. Renshaw, D. Pocock, John L. Frost, Reginald C. Finch, Lilian Isitt, W. Roocroft, William Vaughan.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Fourteen.)

WINNER OF 7s.: ALAN REID, Kelvin House, Anderton Park Road, Moseley, Birmingham.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: GRACIE HUGHES, 5, Ripley Villas, Ealing, W.; and G. L. AUSTIN, "The Knoll," Lancaster.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Tory Almack, Kathleen Langley, A. G. Leigh, Grita McBean, Vera Chambers, Ethel Kempson, Ewen McKay, Kathie Main, Gladys Burton, L. A. Dickinson, Winnie Hosken, H. C. Day, Annie Hamby, Annie Colly.

No. V.—"Winter v. Summer."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF 7s.: HARRY PAYNE, 14, Dryden Street, Nottingham.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: R. A. H. GOODYEAR, Tune Street, Barnsley, Yorks; and H. E. HOULSTON, Palmerston House School, Ross-on-Wye.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Florence A. Ellis, C. V. Thompson, Nellie Kennedy, Jas. J. Nevin, Elsie Simmons, Winifred D. Ereaut, Bernard A. Clarke, Ernest A. Taylor.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Twenty.)

WINNER OF 7s.: M. M. STAFFORD, 43, Granville Park, Blackheath, S.E.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: J. E. R. NOWELL-BARTON, Skipton-Oliffe Rectory, Andoversford, R.S.O., Glos.

HONOURABLE MENTION: J. W. Anderson, James H. Forrester, Francis J. Cunyngiame, Reginald Barnard, Thomas A. Jacques, Evelyn Bryde, Ethel Day, Cyril Burrage, Muriel Cathie.

CLASS III.—(Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF 7s.: WILLIAM KENTISH, Hampton House, Church Road, Moseley, Birmingham.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: CHRIS. H. HAZEL, care of Miss King, Post Office, North Street, Bristol.

HONOURABLE MENTION: P. M. Stewart, G. W. Ivey, William Cameron, James Skuse, R. G. White, Frank Y. Walters, Stanley Bishop, Lawrence Kelly, Francis Purnell-Edwards, C. W. Morrow, E. MacGregor, H. G. Flug, C. E. Thompson, Wm. Boughey.

No. VI.—"Box and Tree."

7s. divided between: T. R. DAVIS, 6, Thurlby Road, West Norwood, S.E.; and H. H. (Will this competitor please send his full name and address?)

HONOURABLE MENTION: Isabel Bray, Violet Helm, Harold R. Fisher, Florence M. Lees, W. A. Oldfield, S. Andrews, H. W. Waters, T. G. Joyce, R. C. Howell, C. Spiers, Thomas R. Worthington, Graham Macpherson, M. U. Johnston, Gertrude Simpson.

Winners of Consolation Prizes are requested to inform the Editor which they would prefer—a volume of the "Captain," "Strand," "Sunday Strand," "Wide World," or one of the books by "Captain" authors advertised in this number.

COMMENTS ON THE DECEMBER COMPETITIONS.

No. I.—The correct list of towns is as follows: Shrewsbury, Slough, Sutton, Swansea, Sherborne, Stamford, Stirling, Sunderland, Taunton, Tiverton, Truro, Tipton, Wakefield, Whitby, Walsall, Windsor, Winchester, Woking, Wolverhampton, Warwick, York, Yeovil, Ynys, Yarmouth.

As some small misconception seems to have arisen in the minds of a few competitors, I should like to point out that not only had the correct names of the towns to be given, but they had also to be placed in the right order.

No. III.—The number of entries for this competition testifies to the popularity of Mr. Wain's pictures; and we have no doubt that the six successful competitors will much prize the original drawings he has so kindly offered to present. It was a most difficult thing to decide on the cleverest stories; but the prize-winners have quite earned their pictures. Never did I hear of such wonderful cats!

No. IV.—Judging by the number of entries, this competition has appealed to a great many of our readers, and some really splendid specimens of left-hand writing were sent in. I noticed that many more members of the fair sex competed, and, in most cases, their writing was the best, because, I suppose, they took more pains with it! At the same time, this must not be taken to imply that the merit was entirely on their side.

No. V.—Evidently a popular subject. This competition produced some excellent essays, one or two of which were treated in a quite original way.

No. VI.—Hundreds of attempts were sent in for this competition, and the prize has been divided between the senders of the two funniest, which we hope to reproduce in the March number.

N.B.—I should like to remind you again to *fasten pages of comps. together*, and mark the *number of comp. and class* on the outside of the envelope.

THE COMPETITION EDITOR.

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DO YOU WANT

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IF SO, YOU CAN HAVE ONE. FREE. GRATIS.

To any Cricketer using a Cook's "Supremus," "British Ensign," "Koocah," "Magic," "Willow King," "Anglo-Saxon," "St. George," "Premier," or "Marvel" Cricket Bat, and making 50 runs off same in an innings during an afternoon Match, or 100 runs in an innings during a one day or three days' Match; we will give, Free Gratis, **A Presentation Bat** of the same sort he made the runs with.

All that is necessary to be done is to take an authenticated copy of the Score Sheets of the Match, signed by the two Captains and the two Umpires of the opposing teams, to the Agent who supplied the Bat, together with a copy of the local paper reporting the Match, and if satisfied that the score was honestly made at fair Cricket, Bat will be immediately presented.

CONDITIONS.—Only one Bat can be won by the same individual in a Season.

The number of the Bat, and date of purchase must be shown.

Bat used must be the personal property of the person using same; but in the case of Clubs and Schools, if winner was using a Club Bat, proof must be produced that the Club or School possesses at least six of above-mentioned Bats.

This offer stands good till end of Cricket Season, 1902.

IF YOU HAVE NOT ONE OF THESE BATS YOU CAN BUY ONE FROM

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N.B.—Should the score that secures a "Presentation Bat" have been registered on the Field in a "British Ensign" or "Magic" Score Book the makers will add an engraved Shield to the Bat.

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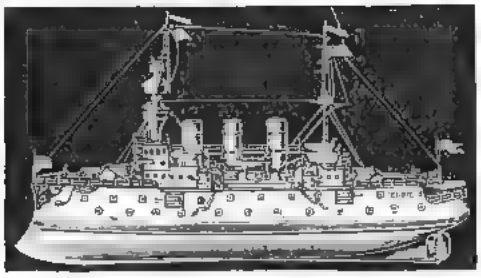
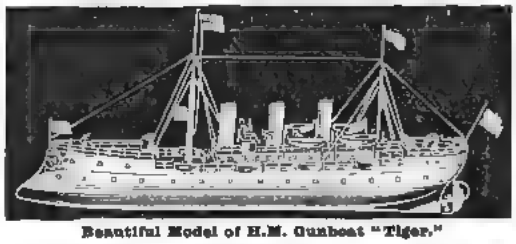
MODEL BATTLESHIPS.



Magnificent Models of H.M. Battleships **Terror** and **Terrible**, built from original dockyard designs, beautifully finished, enamelled, and fittings nickel plated. Sent out complete with 8 Life Boats, 2 fore and aft Barbette Guns, 14 Cannons, 6 Guns in casemants, 4 Quick-firing Guns, and 4 Search-lights, strong Brass Boiler Dome, Marine Engine, Screw Propeller, and Shaft. Strong, substantial, and beautifully made Models, **nearly 3ft. long**, price, carriage paid, **6G/-**; with Boiler, Double Marine Engine, and Twin-screw Propeller, **75/-**, carriage paid.

DEAR SIRS,—The Battleship intended for a birthday gift came duly to hand all safe, and has given most extreme delight and satisfaction to recipient.—Yours very truly, J. S. S. (Lincs.).

MODEL GUNBOATS.



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Fitted up in first-class manner, with Cannons, Quick-firing Guns, Life-boats, strong Brass Boiler, and all fittings as shown, **over 2½ft. long.** Beautifully finished. Price **27/6**. Smaller sizes—2ins. long, **25/6**; 30ins. long, **20/-**, carriage paid.

Division Boats with Quick-firing Guns, Torpedo Tubes, Strong Engines, Boilers, and Screw Propellers. **12/6**. 2ft. long.

Torpedo Boats with Guns, Torpedo Tubes, Strong Engines, Boilers, Propellers, etc., complete. **6/6, 10/6**. Nearly 2ft. long.

Submarine Boats (Patented), fitted with powerful machinery for driving them through the water at a high speed, and under the surface, rising and diving for a considerable time. **6/6** and **14/6**; better quality, **10/6** and **18/6**.

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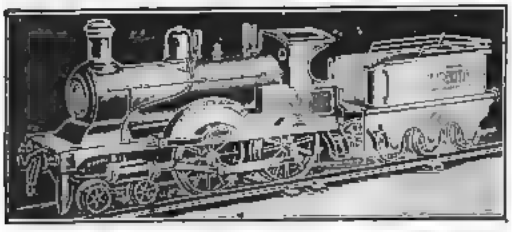

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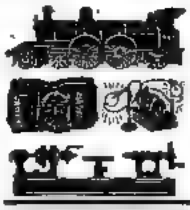

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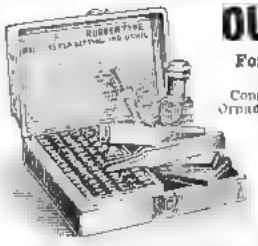

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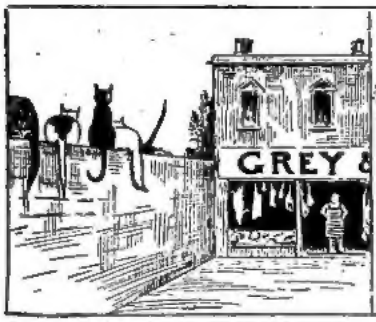

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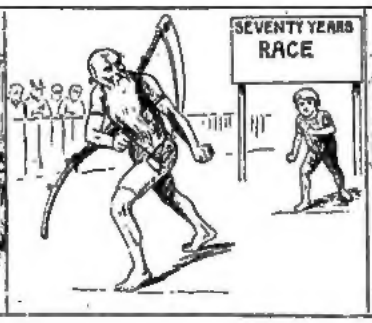

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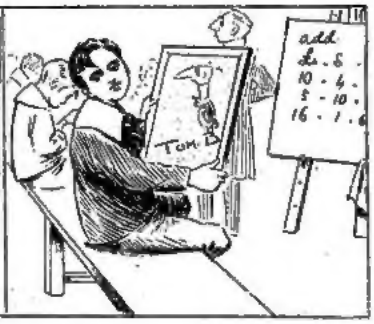

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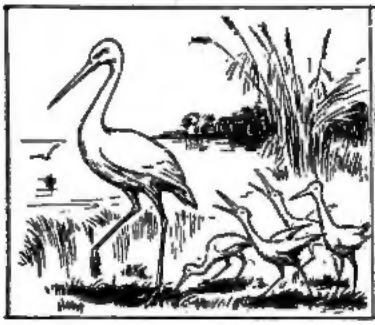

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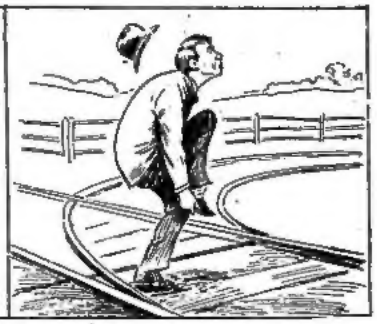

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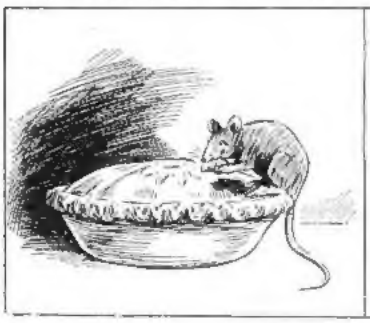

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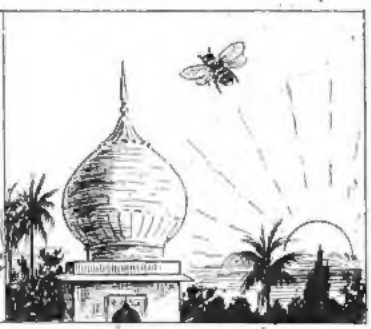

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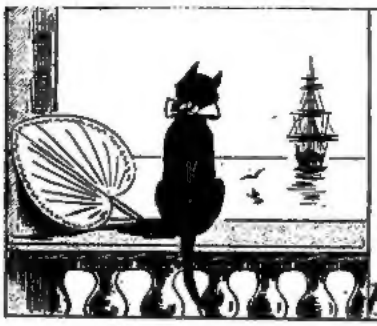

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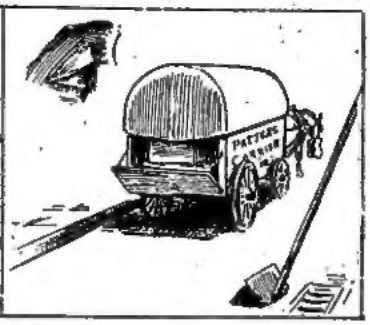

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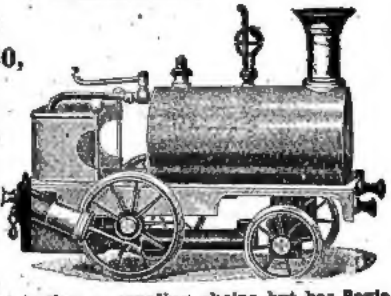

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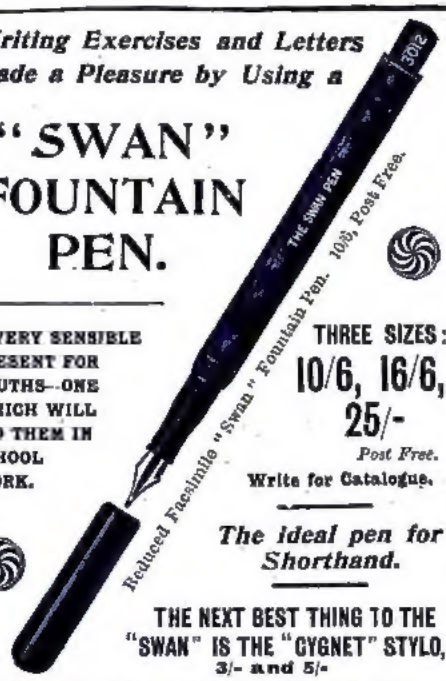

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